Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism

Myōshinji, a living religion

Jørn Borup

BRILL

Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism

Numen Book Series

Studies in the History of Religions

Series Editors

Steven Engler (Mount Royal College, Canada)
Richard King (Vanderbilt University, U.S.A.)
Kocku von Stuckrad (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
Gerard Wiegers (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

VOLUME 119

Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism

Myōshinji, a living religion

By

Jørn Borup

BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2008

On the cover: Myōshinji *honzan* in Kyoto. Photograph by Jørn Borup.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A C.I.P. record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISSN 0169-8834
ISBN 978 90 04 16557 1

Copyright 2008 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Hotei Publishing,
IDC Publishers, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and VSP.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910,
Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

For Marianne, Mads, and Sara

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements xi

Introduction 1

Chapter One Myōshinji: Institution, history, and structure ... 7
- 1.1 Ideology, lineage, and premodern history 7
  - Legendary beginnings 7
  - Tradition, transmission, and sacred kinship 9
  - Myōshinji, *gozan*, and Muromachi 13
  - Tokugawa: *Bakufu, honmatsu seido*, and *danka seido* 17
- 1.2 Meiji Zen: Modernization and invented traditions 20
  - Buddhist responses 23
  - Zen and Myōshinji developments 24
  - Lay Zen 26
- 1.3 Postwar and contemporary Myōshinji Zen 28
  - Judicial and institutional and structure of religious organizations 29
  - Myōshinji institutional structure 31
  - Zen temples 33
  - Economy 39
  - Social, laicized, and international Zen 42
- 1.4 Summary 47

Chapter Two Zen Buddhists 49
- 2.1 Men with or without rank: *shukke, zaike*, and a discussion of terminology 49
- 2.2 The clergy 51
  - *Shukke*: "Leaving home" and returning as a ritual process 52
  - *Shukke* as returning *sōryo* 54
  - Dharma rank and hierarchy; status and stratified clerical systems 56
  - Alternative career mobility: *ango-e* 59
  - Clerical offices 60

The priest 62
The priest wife and the Zen family 70
Temple sons 74
Nuns 76
2.3 The laity 79
Householder or believer: *zaike*, *danka* and *danshinto* 79
Sect-transcending laity; users, clients, and occasional Buddhists 84
Religious confraternities 86
2.4 Mixed categories 88
Intellectuals, critics, and enlightened laymen 88
Foreigners 96
2.5 Summary 99

Chapter Three Zen religious practice 101
3.1 Rituals and ritualization 101
Myōshinji categories and classifying as religious practice 103
Categories of religious practice 105
3.2 Zen ideas and practice 107
3.2.1 Objects of belief and religious practice 108
Superhuman agency, powers, and ideal states 108
Cultural ideal values 120
3.2.2 Subjective qualities and practices 123
Some theoretical remarks on "belief" 123
Belief, commitment, and "meaning to mean it" in the Myōshinji context 125
Ritual practice and how to do it right 129
3.3 Religious education 134
Education, training, cultivation, and mission 134
Cultivating the clergy 136
Cultivating the laity 144
The strategy and reality of training and cultivation 154
3.4 Monastic practice 159
Ritualized monastic life 159
Alms-begging and exchange 168
3.5 Ritualized events; clerical rites of passage 174
Ordaining the monk 175

Installing the master 177
Installing the priest 179
Initiating the dead 183
Structure and semantics of clerical rites of passage 184
3.6 Lay and clerical rituals 186
3.6.1 Daily service and rituals of worship 186
Reihai: Temple and domestic worship 186
Worship as ideal ethical and soteriological practice 191
3.6.2 Ritual texts and doing things with words 195
Rhetoric, semantics, and magic 195
Myōshinji texts 198
Ritualization of texts 201
3.6.3 Rituals of realization: *zazen* and *zazenkai* 205
Meanings, structures, and ideals of meditation 205
Meditation practice 209
3.6.4 Calendrical rituals 216
Seasonal rituals 217
Pilgrimage 222
Sectarian and Buddhist calendrical rituals 224
Memorial days of patriarchs and sect founders 226
Statistics and semantics of calendrical rituals 230
3.6.5 Local Zen folk rituals 234
Daruma-cults and festivals 234
Manninkō kōjūsai: dining, healing, and circumambulating toilets 239
Local folk Zen, an interpretation 243
3.6.6 Rites of passage 246
Lay ordination; *jukai-e* and receiving the precepts 246
Rituals of sociocultural and biological order ... 253
Rituals of death and dying 254
Funeral rituals 255
Structure and meaning of the traditional Zen Buddhist funeral 262
Ideas and ideals of death 263

Modernization, institutionalization, and ritual context 266
3.7 Summary 273

Chapter Four Conclusion 277
Plural Zen 277
Umbrella Zen 278
Hierarchical Zen 280
Power play and exchange 283
Zen rituals and practical meaning 285
Zen and the study of religion 288

Appendix 289

Bibliography 299

Index 313

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is mainly based on material from a Ph.D. project, for which I received a scholarship from the Faculty of Theology, University of Aarhus, and travel grants from Crown Prince Frederik's Fund, Aarhus University Research Foundation, and the Danish Research Council for the Humanities made field research possible.

Armin Geertz (Department of the Study of Religion at Aarhus University) and Ian Reader (Department of Religious Studies, Lancaster University) were my supervisors during my Ph.D. project. I wish to thank them for their guidance, encouragement, and critical readings during the process. Thanks also to colleagues and fellow Ph.D. students for insightful comments and constructive discussions, to Lars Ahlin for his help with my surveys and to Hayashi Mariko and Lars Martin Sørensen for linguistic help, and to George J. Tanabe and Michael Pye for constructive comments at my Ph.D. defense.

In Japan I owe many people my deepest gratitude and respect. During 1996–97, I stayed ten months as a visiting guest researcher at NCC Center for the Japanese Study of Religions (NCC Nihon Shūkyō Kenkyūsho) in Kyoto. In particular, Yuki Hideo, Martin Repp, and Kawaharasaki Keiko gave me help and a friendly environment in which to proceed with my text studies and fieldwork. Thanks to Nishimura Eshin and Usami Sachiko at the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism (Kokusai Zengaku Kenkyūsho) at Hanazono University for considerable assistance and help in most practical matters; to Elizabeth Kenney, Jeff Shore, Tom Wright, and Thomas Kirchner for helpful comments and insights on many aspects of living Zen Buddhism; and to Maeda Naomi from the Research Institute for Zen Culture (Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho), whose assistance, seemingly limitless knowledge on modern Zen, and tireless answers and discussions of my questions were of utmost help during this and previous stays.

My fear of not being able to approach a very traditional and sluggish institution—the nickname of the training hall, "devil's monastery," speaking for itself—was belied by my encounters with representatives from the "system." The friendly assistance and open cooperative attitude of the people working at the main center of the Myōshinji sect,

primarily the Kyōka Sentā and Hanazonokai, gave me the best conditions for collecting the necessary materials for my project.

Apart from inviting me to his temple (where the whole family treated me with pure Japanese hospitality) and his installment ceremony, Okada Seihō from the Myōshinji temple Kōunji helped me answer questions related to Zen practice. Numerous other priests and lay members have helped with all kinds of favors, from introducing people and answering questions to inviting me to dinners or religious gatherings. Most who have stayed in Japan for a longer period will understand my frustration in not being able to repay all the received goodwill, favors, and friendliness from a culture and a people that will always remain in my heart.

Finally, without the patience and love from my wife, Marianne, and my children Mads and Sara, this project would not have been possible.

INTRODUCTION

Zen must be understood from the inside, not the outside.
(Suzuki 1953, 26)

The art of Buddhist funerals in Japan is very Zen.
(Bodiford 1992, 146)

I often ask myself if I am a true Buddhist believer.
(Kisino Kazuo, interview)

All writings, including academic ones, to a large extent mirror the writers' personal storytelling, itself being a reflection of social and intellectual contexts. Study and analysis is never absolutely objective, though academic ideals also within the study of religion can be upheld as such. Paradigms and academic turnings of the wheel are natural devices in relativizing milestones of truth, and the last couple of decades of post-Orientalist self-reflection, sometimes bordering on purgatory atonement, is only sound within the study of Buddhism too; and clarifying who wrote and thought what, inspiring whom, is an interesting part of the archaeology and sociology of knowledge within the network of describers writing and also constructing the stories of *the others*.[1]

When I first went to Japan, I was looking for Zen—the *real* Zen. Upon finding only its traces—e.g., the moon's reflections in the water—the decisive turn was to seek deeper, presuming that gems and true treasures never reveal themselves for surface riders and doubtful agnostics. Though never having really entered the way, academic insights—the kind that in some Zen circles would be termed *barriers*—led me to other hermeneutical struggles and new possible fields of merit. Speculating whether the *real* Zen of earlier Zen writers was actually more than invented traditions with a twist of Americanism, (reversed) Orientalisms and flavored pizza-effects, obscuring factors such as essentialisms, protestantisms, spiritualisms, psychologisms, and textualisms appeared to be part of that container of misrepresentations triggering great balls

---

[1] On the Buddhist context, see Lopez 1995, Snoddgrass 2003, Borup 2005, and the special issue on method in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* (JIABS, 1995).

of doubt and deconstructive catharsis, with which Post-Suzuki Zen scholars have shown the path to many of the younger generations of Zen scholars, including myself.[2]

Only hardcore deconstructivists have an interest in totally deconstructing their empirical fields of investigation. New maps of the territories are necessarily to be reconstructed to justify academic disciplines and scholarly projects. With a corrupted Zen metaphor, one could claim that changes of perspective reveal that mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers, exactly the way one perceives them to be. Later fieldtrips simply made me look for something different: popular Zen, funeral Zen, ritual and institutional Zen, strategic and very human Zen, or as Dōgen said, that which is right under our feet.

Focusing on the plural manifestations of Zen not only acknowledges geographical and historical diversity, but also the fact that there are social, institutional, and cognitive diversities of representation within the field of Zen Buddhism as well. Though such focus in the eyes of "essentialist" interpretations might seem to obscure any substantial object, this need not be the case. "Zen" understood as an institutionally sanctioned subcategory of the Buddhist religion can be used pragmatically by both scholars and officials (e.g., Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Japanese Ministry of Education) as well as an analytical category whose users, beliefs, practices, etc. naturally are plural, but which nevertheless also by Wittgensteinian family resemblance empirically share some distinctive features. The interesting perspectives of managing such diverse clusters of resemblance not only invite discussions of definitions and categorizations, but also of interactions and apparent paradoxical relations. How does a traditional strict monastic Buddhist religion relate to living religiosity among different kinds of lay religiosity? How do contemporary Zen Buddhists cope with modern conditions, what kinds of beliefs and practices are relevant, how are they used? How does Buddha nature relate to ancestors, monks to grandmothers, texts to practice, ideals to realities, individuals to institution?

In such landscapes of living religion Suzuki Zen and spiritualized invented traditions are natural parts. Normative encouragements of having to "go native" or acknowledging the mantra "I am one, so I know" to see it "from the inside" as a monoepistemological truth being

[2] Faure (1991 and 1993), Foulk 1993–94, and Sharf (1993, 1995a, and 1995b) were especially influential for this project.

the criteria of sound scholarship are thus also part of the religious discourses on which to focus on a broader perspective of representations of a living religiosity. Pointing to the moon is an ambitious project, but rethinking Zen as self-reflectively pointing to the fingers pointing to the moon is both a relevant and humbly sufficient parameter within the academic study of religion.

Such plural pointing necessarily invites methodological pluralism, to which I personally also subscribe. This does not mean that all individual approaches need be plural, only that the multidimensional reality is ideally approached through several channels. Not only have recent years of (Zen) Buddhist studies complemented the methodological tools of earlier generations—anthropology, literature, sociology, discourse analysis, etc. are as natural today as historical, philosophical, and philological approaches—but also the objects of research have changed content. Institutions, ritual practices, power relations, hermeneutical strategies, folk culture, material culture, etc. are today as relevant to Zen studies as enlightenment and "the art of…" stories were earlier, though there is still a need for, especially, empirical studies of the living traditions as well as the traditional Buddhist realities of modern Japan.[3]

This book investigates a contemporary Japanese Zen Buddhist sect.[4] I will focus on what I see as important "living" aspects of the religion: the human beings, the religious institution, and the religious practice. Myōshinji is the largest of the fifteen Rinzai sects. I chose it not only because of its size but also because of its relevance as a major representative of Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism, the kind that Suzuki favored but which nevertheless compared to the Sōtō sect has scarcely been studied.

The history and structure of the Myōshinji sect is described in chapter one. Legendary beginnings with the patriarchs and notions such as lineage, tradition, and transmission are interpreted as still relevant

---

[3] In recent years such areas have been the subjects of studies by, for instance, Baroni (2000), Bodiford (1994), Heine (1999), Heine and Wright (2000), Heisig and Maraldo (1994), Hōri (2003), Hubbard and Swanson (1997), Jaffe (2001), McRae (2004), Reader (1985, 1986, 1989, and 1999), Rowe (2004), and Victoria (1997); and both Lopez (2005) and Busswell (2004) symptomatically reflect general trends in modern Buddhist studies.

[4] "Sect" is not meant pejoratively, but is the English word most often used by religious institutions themselves in Japan, in translating the term 宗 (*shū*) or 宗派 (*shūha*, "subsect"). Whereas "school" often connotes doctrinal relevance, sect is here used neutrally as a subcategory of the Japanese Zen lineages within the overall Buddhist religion.

and legitimate concepts of a sacred kinship, before the religious and sociopolitical history is outlined from the institutional foundations in the fourteenth century to modern time, focusing particularly on the important epistemological and social changes around the Meiji restoration. The development of postwar and contemporary Myōshinji Zen is described through juridical, institutional, and economic aspects, with a focus on the structure and function of the temple.

Initially I wanted to compare monastic and lay Zen Buddhism, but subsequently I found these concepts too narrow—both because monastic Buddhism in Japan is typically only a periodical phase in the clerical process, and because the concepts "monk" and "lay" (or the indigenous *shukke* and *zaike*, renouncer and householder) are more complex than a dichotomous pair expresses. I broadened the perspective to include all those kinds of persons involved in the religion, categorizing them into different roles and types such as priests, priest wives, temple sons, monks, nuns, devoted believers, members, householders, confraternities, and "mixed categories"—all being the object of chapter two.

Chapter three, on religious practice, is the largest chapter. It describes different concepts related to practice (i.e., ideas and ideals, objects of belief and cultural values, and the terminology of religious practice) and discusses important missionary and educational strategies within the institutional framework, functioning both as frames within which rituals and practice are generated and interpreted as well as a kind of institutional practice itself. Ritualized activities distinguish between monastic and lay rituals, the former including a general analysis of monastic life and the clerical rites of passage, the latter being descriptions and analyses of selected rituals with either a temporal (daily, calendrical, passage) or thematic (texts, *zazen*, "folk") relation. Descriptions and interpretations of religious practice are continuously related to textual and normative hermeneutics and strategies within the Myōshinji institutional context.

The concluding chapter four sums up and synthesizes the individual chapters, giving a conclusive discussion on the relationship between Zen Buddhists, institution, and religious practice within the contemporary Myōshinji sect. It is argued that a double-sided strategy of both exclusive, hierarchical Zen and inclusive, "umbrella Zen" necessarily must be recognized and legitimated by the institution in a context of pluralism and secularism, and that the laity as religious practitioners on the one hand are both ascribed static roles by the institution and on the other hand themselves have the power through levels and kinds of affiliation, engagement, belief, and practice to influence the overall institution.

The bibliography contains primary and secondary sources, the former being annotated and defined as material published (and supposedly used) by the sect (and its members). An appendix is attached, containing data from surveys.

My approaches are plural. First of all, I have had access to most of the relevant publications from the institution addressed to the clergy and the laity. These include manuals and guidebooks (addressed to priests, their wives, or lay members), periodicals (especially *Hanazono* and *Shōbōrin*), the official constitution of the sect, and pamphlets, research volumes, and white papers from the head office's Religious Education Centre (Kyōka Sentā). I have not included specialist commentaries or translations of classical texts, but focused on material having "practical" relevance to its contemporary users. The source material will be further presented in the following chapters, and an annotated bibliography will shortly describe each of the primary sources.

Complementarily, I have spent much of my time in Japan doing fieldwork. After my initial stay as a student in 1991, I spent a whole year from 1996–97 followed by two months in 2000 and shorter stays in 2002 and 2004. I chose Kyoto mainly because of its abundance of religious life, (Zen) temples, and especially the presence of the headquarters, the Hanazono University and religious and/or academic institutions (primarily the NCC Center for the Study of Japanese Religions and the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism), where I could get access to texts, make contacts with people, and network in and outside of Kyoto. Apart from a general interest in observing any kind of ritual or religious practice, I have tried to follow as many gatherings, rites of passage, and yearly rituals conducted at the main temple complex in Kyoto as possible. I have also attended several *zazenkai* (meditation sessions) both within and outside Myōshinji affiliated contexts; visited, stayed in, and made pilgrimages to many individual Myōshinji temples; and talked to Myōshinji (and other sect-affiliated) priests and laypersons. Though I have only seen and encountered a minority of the Myōshinji world, I have acquired what I consider a fairly solid general impression of the sect as a living religion.[5]

Finally, I have used surveys to quantify the voices of the individual agents within the institution. In particular, the surveys conducted by the

---

[5] Undoubtedly I would have been inspired by the research of Japanese religions by Makino (2006), Ruppert (2006), and Schnell (2006).

Kyōka Sentā (with questionnaires sent to priests and *danka* on different topics) have been very useful; that is a project I could not possibly have realized myself. I did distribute some questionnaires of my own on four different occasions: two classes at the religious studies department at Hanazono University, a university *sesshin*, a *zazenkai* at the Taishū Zendō and a gathering of the Musō Kyōkai—the latter three at the Myōshinji main temple in Kyoto (see appendix). The small number of participants naturally does not give a representative image of the opinions of lay people, but the responses did give me data to compare to the other surveys and to the publications and religious practice of the sect.

Regarding conventions, I have followed the Japanese rule of writing family names first. For transcribing Japanese and Chinese words I have used respectively Hepburn's system and *pinyin*. Foreign words included in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (e.g., nirvana, satori, Mahayana) or proper names expected to be known by nonspecialists (e.g., Kyoto, Tokyo) are written without diacritical marks, whereas those not included (e.g., *upāya, sōdō*) are italicized and with diacritical marks.

CHAPTER ONE

MYŌSHINJI: INSTITUTION, HISTORY, AND STRUCTURE

A walk through the precincts of the Myōshinji temple complex in Kyoto leaves no doubt that this is a living manifestation of an important religious tradition. The buildings themselves are architectural sights dating back some seven hundred years to the time when abdicated emperor Hanazono decided to build a detached villa and create a symbol of his religious career and political power.

Today Myōshinji is the largest Rinzai Zen sect in Japan. The temple complex in Kyoto consists of 46 subtemples, and 3,500 local temples throughout the country reveal the size of the institution. Myōshinji has twenty training halls for monks and one for nuns. There are 7,000 persons with a clerical rank, 3,300 functioning priests, and 330,000 households registered as "believers."

This chapter will introduce the Myōshinji history and institution. A sketchy account from the legendary and institutional beginning through Meiji and the postwar period will trace elements from its religious and social history to the contemporary institutional context.

1.1 Ideology, Lineage, and Premodern History

Legendary beginnings

Distinguishing fact and fiction, myth and history often expresses more about the categorizations of the interpreter than the gray area of reality. Religious universes in one sense are based on counterintuitive visions, but also lives by metaphors from a very concrete reality. Family relation is a typical Buddhist and Japanese metaphor and classificatory instrument with which to encapsulate sectarian lineages, transmission histories, and religious "family resemblances" with roots, trunk, offshoots, etc.

Like all Buddhist schools and sects around the world, Zen Buddhism traces its roots to the founder, the historical or "human" (*ningen*) Śākyamuni Buddha (*J. shaka* 釈迦 or *hotoke* 仏). He is considered the founding teacher (*honshi*) of the Zen sects, and a statue of him is generally

suggested to be the enshrined main image (*honzon*) in Buddhist altars (*butsudan*) in every believer's home, as well as in the Buddha Hall (*butsuden*) of the main temple or the ceremony hall (*hondō*) of any Zen temple. Zen sects also consider themselves to be followers and carriers of the Buddha mind, sometimes referring to their sect(s) as "*busshinshū*" (e.g., *Zau*, 180), or a Buddhism based on practice (*jissen*, Satō 1982, 110), as opposed to the theoretical study of Buddhism, *gakumon bukkyō*, scholastic Buddhism (ibid. 109) or "*kyōshū*," sects based on doctrines (see *Waga rinzaishū*). This distinction, still held today, supposedly goes back to the time when Chan/Zen found its legitimate place on top of or above the Chinese hermeneutical and institutional hierarchical system *panjiao*.[1] The true and most correct means of enlightenment and directly transmitted practice as exposed by the Buddha was seen to be meditation, *jhana* and *dhyana* in Sanskrit and Pali, and *chan* and *zen* in Chinese and Japanese. Since the establishment as an institutionalized school in the beginning of the Song era (see Foulk 1987),[2] the "meditation school" (禅宗 Ch. *chanzong*, J. *zenshū*) has used meditation as its trademark, including as a practice, a symbol, and a doctrine.

Another legend with significance for all Zen sects is the story of what happened at the Vulture Peak (*ryōzen-e*). Śākyamuni Buddha held up a flower to the assembly of monks, and as the only one among a silent assembly Mahākāśyapa (*J. Makakashō*) understood the "message," intuitively responding with his paradigmatic smile. Buddha said he had the "Treasury of the true Dharma eye, the wondrous mind of nirvana, the subtle dharma-gate born of the formlessness of true form, not established on words and letters, a special transmission outside the teaching," and that he bequeathed it to Mahākāśyapa.[3] This founding legend for all Zen schools[4] is treated in different stories, also in a kōan from the *Wumen guan* (*J. Mumonkan*) collection. The Myōshinji institution

[1] On *panjiao*, see Gregory 1988.

[2] "Chan grew up primarily as a reaction against Indian-style dhyāna, often seen by the Chinese as a surefire way to achieve supernatural powers" (Faure 1997, 10).

[3] Translation from Welter 2000, 75. In the Myōshinji materials this episode is mentioned and explained several times—e.g., *Josei no bukkyō* 2, 9, *Zau*, 34—and an English version can be found at www.myoshin.com/english/doctrine.html.

[4] Welter (2000) places the origin of the story to the Song period in which Chan monks fabricated it in their attempt to define and legitimate a Chan identity. Also in a kōan from the *Wumen guan* (*J. Mumonkan*) collection the story is mentioned. *Mumonkan* means "the gateless barrier" to entering the ideal of no-mind. It also indicates an institutional boundary marker, the full title being *chan zong wumen guan*, "the gateless barrier to the Chan sect" (Miura and Sasaki 1966, 343).

has taken it as its etymological legitimation; Shōbōzan Myōshinji 正法山妙心寺 means "the temple of the true dharma and the wondrous heart," a name given by Zen master Daitō Kokushi. The performative act of "lifting the flower and smiling" (*nengemishō*)[5] is a key legend explaining Zen transmission from master to disciple, suggesting the "special transmission outside the teaching" and the ideal of the unique patriarchal lineage.

Tradition, transmission, and sacred kinship

Although iconoclasm and negation of symbolic rank is often praised, symbols and rules of transmission and institutional belonging have always been part of Chan/Zen ideology and practice.

Ketelaar distinguishes between two central types of transmission (1990, 204). One is esoteric and based on a direct (physical) contact between master and disciple. Transmitting the tradition and the enlightened mind is transmitted from face to face (面授 *menju*), from mind to mind (以心傳心 *ishindenshin*). The mediated relationship is metaphorically described as lighting a candle with a flame, or as water being carried and transmitted from one container to the other, organically mediated but with a pure and intact essence. Another type is exoteric and unmediated, requiring direct access to the teaching through a personal discovery of one's own self. This type of transmission and identification is symbolized by the discovery of a shining lantern, or a mirror. These two types correspond to the logic of genealogy (the mediated) and analogy (the unmediated), but both supposedly require spiritual insight and institutional recognition.[6]

The question of transmission is first a matter of belonging to the sacred lineage of patriarchal Zen masters. Kraft suggests the various divisions of Chinese Chan primarily to be seen as means of identifying master-disciple lineages (1992, 55). Tradition might wait for patriarchs, but it is equally true that these are "patriarchs in search of a tradition" (Faure 1993, 12). In a social constructivist sense, Chan masters

[5] The lotus flower is also called *konparage*, which is also the name of a journal for students at Hanazono University.

[6] These different analogies are found several places in the literature from Myōshinji—e.g., *Josei no bukkyō* 2, 7, and 11 and *Hanazono Q & A*, 63. On Chan metaphors, see McRae 1986 and Lai 1979.

> are not masters because they have realized the truth and can now teach it (although, of course, this may be the case); rather, they can teach the truth because, having been socially defined as Chan masters, what they teach has the performative power of being the truth (Faure 1991, 22).

Forged genealogies and "official and practical sectarian affiliations were strategically used" (ibid. 24), and Chan/Zen Buddhist history has revealed many controversies of representing truth or belonging to the right sect.[7] During the Tokugawa period, "the misuse of Dharma-succession practices had become a plague that affected the credibility of the entire Zen Buddhist clergy" (Mohr 1994, 359). Before that, both Linji and Ikkyū were said to have refused to receive transmission certificates (印可証明 *inka shōmei*) in neglecting the whole circus surrounding these.[8] Apart from such delicate matters of institutional legitimacy, the ritual drama of transmission should not be ignored. As if enacting the paradigmatic event with the sixth patriarch, who sneaked out during the night with his symbols of recognition (McRae 1986), *inka shōmei* today in the Rinzai school is given in secrecy until publicly announced at a formal ceremony (see also 177–179).

The founding fathers and their line of later patriarchs—many of whom are (semi-)legendary figures—are both products of the tradition as well as active agents constituting the tradition. The sacred patriarchy is both a model *of* as well as a model *for* the institution and tradition. Each of the masters has the same attribute of being transmitter of the sacred blood lineage (*kechimyaku*), guaranteeing orthodoxy and -praxy and embodying both the original Buddha/Buddhahood, the dharma, and the institution (sangha). Each figure has a particular quality and role in a puzzle that retrospectively combines the units in a kaleidoscopic whole, finding its ritual manifestation in temples and

---

[7] Accusations of false, or no, spiritual enlightenment were directed against, e.g., Dainichi Nōnin (d. 1196?), the founder of the Daruma school, as he only got his transmission through letters from his master in China. Gross calls this "mail-order transmission" (1998, 30). Faure says about Chan and the patriarchs: "The patriarchal tradition is a product of people on the margins, the result of their desire to become the party of the orthodox. It is not a sign of a richness in the tradition, but rather of a lack in it. It is on the fringes, on the shifting boundaries between this school and other religious movements—not all of them Buddhist—that the destiny of the Chan tradition was shaped" (Faure 1997, 9).

[8] Especially in the Muromachi period, when Ikkyū lived, *inka shōmei* were said to shift hands whenever temples needed money or powerful individuals needed status or a religiously sanctioned "passport."

monasteries where lineages are chanted to identify past and present in a performative unity.

In such lineages, to whom all Zen sects ascribe, we find initially the first Chan/Zen patriarch Bodhidharma (J. Daruma, entitled the beginning founder, *shoso*), who was also the twenty-eighth patriarch in line since Śākyamuni Buddha, Mahākāśyapa, Nāgārjuna, and all the other Indian predecessors. We find the Chinese masters, among whom Baizhang (J. Hyakujō, d. 814, supposedly the author of the Chan monastic rules and the Zen work ethic slogan "no work, no food) and Linji (J. Rinzai), the founder of the Linji/Rinzai lineage, are most important to the Myōshinji lineage, both being celebrated as sect founders. Among the Japanese masters, Kanzan and Hakuin, respectively the founder and the reformer of the Myōshinji sect, are revered as important transmitters and transformers of this lineage.

All Buddhisms claim a relationship to the "original" Buddha/Buddhism, often considering the different Buddhist religions as alternative approaches to the same goal and origin. Zen lineages often see themselves as branches of the same trunk, beginning at the same root. While institutional rhetoric and ideology have also claimed exclusiveness, uniqueness, and evolution,[9] family terminology is and has been a major model for explaining and promoting intra- and inter-institutional belonging to such lineage (系 *kei*), transmission (傳 *den*), branch (派 *ha*), or stream (流 *ryū*). The patriarchs (祖 *so*, also "ancestor" or "founder") are the fathers, and their successors in the dharma (*hassu*) are their heirs. In monastic life the master is the father, the disciples his spiritual children, who themselves are dharma brothers, and all Buddhists are the children of Buddha.[10]

---

[9] In, for instance, seeing in Japanese Zen a teleologically progressed peak of an almost nature bound evolution. Such "teleological fallacy" in reading "early Chan as having its finality in modern Japanese Zen" (Faure 1993, 114) is seen in some of D. T. Suzuki's works.

[10] Within the Sōtō school the two sect founders Dōgen and Keizan, with their different roles as the strict monastic founder and the more "soft" popularizer of the sect, are seen to represent the absolute and the relative truth (Reader 1985, 32), and publications from the sect depict them as respectively the father and the mother, with all later masters and lay believers as their offspring (SSSMC 1991, 22, ibid. 1994, 34). Since the Tokugawa period, differences in teaching and practice style have divided Rinzai Zen monastic lineages into two main traditions: the Insan and the Takuan lineage, expressing a spiritual dharma relationship between master and disciple. Inzan Ien (1751–1814) and Takujū Kōsen (1760–1833) were both disciples of Hakuin's disciple Gasan Jitō (1727–97). The style of practice differs in, for instance, the use of *jakugo* ("capping phrases") in kōan training. If a monk considers changing monasteries, he

This vertical dharma lineage (法系 *hōkei* or 法脈 *hōmyaku*) is counterbalanced by a related kinship between temples (法類 *hōrui*), whose horizontal relationship is equivalent to the relations among the monks, and whose vertical relationship as branch temples to the main temple (本山 *honzan*) is equivalent to the monks' relation to their master—a relationship further reflecting the social structures of kinship in Japanese society. The master is part of a large institution, as are the subtemples, and both have several units below them (disciples and local temples belonging to the temple lineage)—they are both results of, and themselves generating, the lineage. The monks in the training halls have the same teacher, and the branch temples have the same mother-temple, and both monks and branch temples are on the same "level"; they are part of the same dharma relation (*hōrui*), just as the masters of different training halls share the same *hōrui* with other masters, and subtemples within the *honzan* might be from different lineages (*hōkei*) but share the same dharma relation. Dharma relations naturally can vary in intensity and significance. All priests know which temples they are affiliated with since recognition is necessary when applying for a new rank (*hōkai*, see 56–59), and especially during rituals the dharma related priests will assist and join the celebrations. Vertical and horizontal hierarchical relations are often counterbalanced by ideals of family symbolism, an intimate relation not all individuals necessarily approve of. Some far away countryside temples might not feel closely related to either their lineage mother temple or the central mother temple complex in Kyoto.

Whether institutional identification should be based on the vertical and spiritual model (*ninbō* 人法 "personal transmission," in which temple lineage affiliation is defined by the monastic master's lineage) or on the temple lineage model (*garanbō* 伽藍法 in which temple lineage determines personal affiliation) has resulted in some debate,[11] including accusations of heresy and broken transmission lines. Temple affiliation based on biology (the son inherits his fathers temple and position) has

might have to start all over from the beginning in his kōan-progress if the monastery belongs to a different lineage. In Zen history, changing or having several masters from different dharma lineages has not been uncommon (e.g., Hakuin), and the *shisho* (sponsor or ordination priest) need not be from the same lineage as the training hall or dharma teacher. There are also examples of individuals crossing between the Sōtō and Rinzai sects. Though one can change lineage oneself, in the present day constitution of Myōshinji it is stated that the temple cannot change lineage unless one wants to start a new lineage as an independent organization (*Shūsei* 272–73).

[11] This is especially true within the Sōtō school. See Bodiford 1991 and Gross 1998.

become the most widespread since the Meiji period. Michel Mohr says about Rinzai Dharma transmission that it is essentially subjective, and

> left to the discretion of the master, and the ambiguity of terms such as 'successor in the Dharma' (*hassu*) has persisted down to the present. According to the context or the circumstances, it can signify either spiritual recognition or inheritance of a temple lineage (1994, 358).

Whereas the "true" lineage of patriarchs is limited to the masters (*shike*) of the training halls, the most common form of transmission—in which no *inka shōmei* is given—only means a recognition that a monk has stayed in the monastery a certain period of time, later to become a priest in a temple. Further down the hierarchy, lay people can also symbolically join this sacred community in participating in rituals of commitment (*jukai-e*), and by simply dying (see 254–262).

Whereas intrasectarian relationships are guarded and honored, intersectarian and interreligious relationships are usually also kept to at least a polite level. Thus in family terminology, within Myōshinji one could talk of close brothers (*hōrui* related brothers being even closer), within the Rinzai sects of brothers, within the Zen lineages of cousins, Buddhist religions of related family, while most of the new (Buddhist) religions are usually considered (at best) remote or even fallen relatives—Sōka Gakkai and the Nichiren sects among the other traditional Buddhist sects often have an image of being the "black sheep" of the family. Especially in the local communities, sectarian affiliation of the temples has less importance, with some temples co-operating in ritual contexts. If moving to a new place, the temple will contact another from the same sect, or from another Rinzai sect. It is an unwritten rule among the traditional Buddhist sects (except, I was told, the Nichiren sect) that temples are not supposed to receive new adherents from other sects. In reality, however, it is not always followed, especially in the urbanization of modern times where sect affiliation most often is a question of geographical location—and where it can be difficult for a priest to resist new members and new sources of income.

Myōshinji, gozan, *and Muromachi*

The "Jade Phoenix Hall" and the "Lotus Room" are two important relics within the Myōshinji *honzan* in Kyoto, open to the public at certain grand ceremonies where participants have the chance to feel the atmosphere of institutional history. The building containing the two

rooms is a reconstruction of the actual retreat of the cloistered emperor Hanazono (花園1297–1348, r. 1308–1318),[12] who in 1337 established Myōshinji by converting his country residence into a temple.

Hanazono is known in Japan for being an intellectual interested in philosophy, religion, and literature. He was a Zen student and a patron and disciple of both Shūhō Myōchō (Daitō Kokushi 1282–1337, from whom he received a transmission certificate)[13] and later Kanzan Egen (1277–1360), both of whom he granted the title of National Teacher (*kokushi*). He is known to have been a seriously practicing monk, and though he was said to be quite well-versed in Buddhist doctrines himself, he criticized the Musō (Musō Soseki 1275–1351) lineage for being too bookish (Collcutt 1981, 86). In 1337 he granted land—itself called a "flower garden," 花園 *hanazono* (*Josei no bukkyō* 3, 72)—and a detached imperial villa (*rikyū*) to be the ground of a Zen monastery in which he himself spent much of his time until his death in 1348. Emperor Hanazono (Hanazono Tennō) is known in contemporary Myōshinji terminology as the "dharma king" or monk-emperor (法皇 *hō-ō*), and some of his writings—e.g., his diary, *Hanazono Inshinki*, and the death testament *ōnen no Shinkan*—and ideas are treated as guidelines for the institution, in line with scriptures from earlier patriarchs and their teachings. He is referred to in the official constitution as the builder (開基 *kaiki*), and one of the patrons and most important figures of the temple complex and the sect (*Shūsei* 1997, 3). He is also the model figure of the lay movement, the Hanazonokai (147 ff), and in many publications it is stressed that the whole sect and its individual members should pay respect and have a feeling of gratitude (*kansha*) and thankfulness (*okagesama*) to the emperor, deeds which he himself supposedly cultivated. The dilemma of combining an honorific attitude to a main figure of the sect and yet questioning the long tradition of "imperial-way Buddhism" (Victoria 1997, 79–94), with its militaristic and nationalistic overtones, is dealt with also within Myōshinji. Although his birthday is still celebrated, and a text (祝聖 *shukushin*) honoring the emperor and the nation is still chanted in the monasteries,

[12] He was forced to abdicate in 1318 when he was twenty-one years old, but continued to have influence. On Hanazono, see Goble 1989 and 1995.

[13] *Yoku wakaru Myōshinji*, 12. Daitō was the founder of the famous and in medieval Japan influential temple Daitokuji in Kyoto. Hanazono appointed Daitokuji as an imperial prayer center, and later issued a decree reconfirming its privilege of single-line succession.

> the concern for the emperor's well-being stems more from a desire to remain true to the ritual procedures outlined in Song Chinese and medieval Japanese Zen monastic codes than from any current ideological or political considerations (Foulk 1988, 163).

Kanzan Egen 關山慧玄 was selected by Daitō and Hanazono to be the first abbot of Myōshinji. He is also known as Musō Daishi, a title bestowed on him by the Meiji emperor, or the honorable founder (開山 *kaisan*, litt. "opener of the mountain") with the full title Kaisan Musō Daishi (開山無相大師). He supposedly was a humble and simple man—he is said to have lived eight years in the countryside, herding cattle and cultivating fields and at night going into his cliff to sit in quietude (Miura and Sasaki 1966, 74)—and he is also honored as a founding father of the sect. Though there are no written sources from his hand, he is represented by a portrait (*chinsō*), his living quarters (*Gyokuhōin*), and the founder's hall (*Kaisandō Mishōan*, in which his remains are contained) at the main center in Kyoto. Hanazono and Kanzan are the two venerable masters (*sonja*) ideally enshrined on both sides of Śākyamuni Buddha in the temples and home altars of the Myōshinji devotees, the three of them called *sanzonbutsu*. It is thus surprising that only half of the 5,006 asked Myōshinji adherents visiting the main temple in Kyoto actually knew who the founder of their sect was (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 7–8).

In the period when Myōshinji was built, Kyoto and Japan suffered from wars, hunger, and poverty—this being proof to many of the plausibility of the Buddhist theories of the "final age" (*mappō*)—but Japanese Rinzai Zen also flourished, and it has often been considered to be its peak period in terms of art, architecture, monastic development, and power.[14] Rinzai Zen (and to some extent Buddhism in general) was dominated by the powerful religiopolitical system of *gozan* (五山 "five mountains"), a hierarchically related system of family temples, originally copied from a similar Chinese temple structure.[15] The *gozan* system had close relations to the military government (*bakufu*); they had political interests in supporting each other, symbolized by warriors

[14] It is estimated that by the Ōnin period the population of all monasteries was at least 50.000 persons, not including all the temples outside the *gozan* network (Collcott 1981, 225).

[15] The system in China, however, did not have the same political and institutional significance as it did in medieval Japan (Collcutt 1981, xvii). See also Bowring 2005, 400–409.

calling themselves lay monks and monks wearing arms and affecting the military balance (Kraft 1992, 21).[16] The temples not included in the *gozan* system were referred to as *ringe* or *rinka* (林下 "below the grove"), thus emphasizing differences between insiders and outsiders. "Rinzai for the *shōgun*, Sōtō for the peasants" (*rinzai shōgun, sōtō domin*) was a slogan used to express the difference between the metropolitan and the provincial centers (Collcutt 1981, 29), perhaps also indicating that "Sōtō Zen, more than Rinzai, merged with indigenous folklore" (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 62). Though periodically affiliated with the system, Myōshinji never played an important part of the *gozan* network. It was not because it was a static system, since, for instance, the former *ringe* Daitokuji later did join the *gozan* family. Rather it was because of different political controversies between abbot and rival lords (*daimyō*), which also resulted in temple property being transferred or confiscated. At one time Myōshinji was even made a branch temple of a subtemple (under the name Ryoanji) of Nanzenji, and "its monks were scattered, and its buildings allowed to fall derelict" (Collcutt, 1981, 128). The close connections between temples and the bakufu was the success but also the fate of the *gozan* temples, which "went hand in hand with the decline and eventual demise of the Muromachi *bakufu*" (Akamatsu & Yampolsky 1977, 327). The Ōnin war (1467–77) destroyed almost all temple buildings, but Myōshinji was later rebuilt as a prosperous institution, incorporating many former *gozan* temples, just as itself originally was only a subtemple of Daitokuji. Today it is the absolute largest of all Rinzai Zen institutions, and its lineage *ōtōkan*, (combining letters from influential non-*gozan* figures Dai*ō*: Daiō Kokushi/Nampo Jōmyō, 1235–1308, Dai*tō*: Daitō Kokushi, and *Kan*zan: Kanzan Egen), has as an alternative "dominated Rinzai Zen from the seventeenth century to the present" (Yampolsky 1988, 151).

[16] "Zen itself might have been absorbed into Tendai or Shingon, without achieving an independent identity, had it not been for two factors: powerful patrons began to support the fledgling sect, and several distinguished Ch'an masters arrived from China" (Kraft 1992, 50). Already Myōan Eisai (1141–1215, often entitled the founder of Japanese Rinzai Zen) had aimed at strategic alliance with the government, expressed in his "Propagation of Zen for the Protection of the Country" (Tsunoda et al. 1958, 235–37). In general, "Zen temples and their abbots became to the Ashikaga what Enryakuji and Kōfukuji had been to the court and the sovereign, a guarantee of their prestige and legitimacy" (Bowring 2005, 400).

Tokugawa: Bakufu, honmatsu seido, *and* danka seido

During the Muromachi period, Japanese monks and sects became more independent from their Chinese relations. Though they still served as "outposts of Chinese religion and culture in medieval Japanese society" (Collcutt 1981, 172), "it is difficult to realize how exotic the new Zen monasteries must have seemed in the thirteenth century" (ibid. 171). It is often stated that medieval Zen Buddhism spread to the whole country and became part of Japanese culture, especially in the provinces where "numerous extraneous elements derived from other forms of Buddhism, both esoteric and Pure Land" (Akamatsu & Yampolsky 1977, 319). However, Rinzai Zen in this period was still primarily a religion of the urban elite. Strategic interests in keeping the image of a strong and distinct religion was needed in being acculturated from the top and in spreading as a Japanese religion.

The Tokugawa period has often been treated as the "dark age" of Japan and Japanese religion. Rinzai Zen lost much of its influence and was no more automatically the de facto state religion, but the Tokugawa period also "saw Myōshinji at its most flourishing" (Miura and Sasaki 1966, 218). In 1509 land was donated to Myōshinji, and an impressive temple complex with seven halls (七堂伽藍 *shichidō garan*) was built. Subtemples (*tacchū* 塔頭)[17] surrounding the main complex were also built, and the number of local branch temples (*matsuji* 末寺) increased. According to a survey made by the *bakufu* in 1789, there were 100 *tacchū*[18] and *ryōsha* (dormitories) and 5,000 *matsuji* in the Myōshinji sect, which during this period became the largest (Takenuki 1992, 27, 249, 252). Also, hermitages were built to those four disciples of the sixth generation priest of Myōshinji (Sekkō Sōshin, 1408–86), all of whom were given transmission and successively the office of being priest at the main temple. These hermitages, until the Meiji era having semi-independent status as "four main temples within the main sect"

[17] *Tacchū*, litt. "stupa head," from around the thirteenth century, was a uniquely Japanese development (Collcutt 1981, 181), often taking over the function and physically replacing other buildings such as reading rooms, monks' halls, and kitchen-office buildings, some of which fell into disuse. Unlike today, where these function as normal temples with *danka*s, and some of them with graveyards, their original function was also to protect the main temple complex. Some of the local, private clan temples (*ujidera*, originally from pre-Buddhist *ujigami-jinja*) were converted into Zen monasteries in medieval times (Collcutt 1981, 82).

[18] According to Nara and Nishimura (1979, 306) the number of *tacchū* peaked with 165 in the Tokugawa period.

(本派四本庵), today function as normal temples but still have a special symbolic status.[19]

Though the *gozan* system in many ways reflected the political system of the Muromachi period, it was not as rigidly structured and restricted as under the Tokugawa regimes, which strengthened its control. In 1632 the *bakufu* ordered all temples to have official ties with other designated temples and be registered in the *honmatsu seido* (本末制度), "main-branch system."[20] This meant that there were to be no independent temples, and lineage was often centralized and determined from above. It also meant that there was to be only one main temple in each sect, one large (*dai*) *honji* for all Rinzai temples, with smaller temples hierarchically divided in mid-size (*chū*) temples and smaller (*matsu*) temples. This system was a development of the *furegashira* system, in which a head temple (also called a *furegashira*, "touch, leader"), functioning as a government-sect liaison temple mediating between sect and government, would have the control over other temples in the area, whether from the same sect or not. Clerics were placed in the rigid social-stratified system above merchants and peasants, but below *samurai*, and the *bakufu* regulated, controlled, and sanctioned monastic law and practice, including standards for priesthood hierarchy, robe colors, and procedures for obtaining permission for promotions.[21] Although punishment for breaking the monastic rules were sporadic and "honored more in the breach than in fact, state support of clerical regulations throughout the Edo period insured that those rules of conduct remained the unquestioned standard of clerical behavior" (ibid. 3). As opposed to most other social classes that were based on birth, entering the Buddhist monastic life was based on ordination and was thus for many an opportunity for social upward mobility—and for both the monk and his family to gain good merit.

---

[19] These *tacchū* and the four disciples were Ryōsenan (Keisen Sōryū), Tōkaian (Gokei Sōton), Reiunan (Tokubō Zenketsu), and Shōtakuan (Tōyō Eichō). On these four temples, see Takenuki 1992, 144–47, 257 and *Hanazono Q & A*, 66–67.

[20] It was not an altogether new practice to incorporate smaller units into larger institutions. Already in the Heian period, temples and Shinto shrines were absorbed into larger temples or monastic complexes. Shōgun Nobunaga in 1578, in his early attempt to structure the temples, designated the Jionji Jōgonin as the *honji* (head temple) of all its 808 subtemples (McMullin 1984, 224).

[21] See Jaffe 2001, 9–35 on pre-Meiji conditions for clerics. Restrictions were, however, not always followed passively. Myōshinji priests were also involved in the "purple robe incident," in which the *bakufu* made regulations of who were permitted to obtain and wear a purple robe (a symbol associated with the imperial household).

Another means of controlling the population was the *danka seido* 檀家制度 "household system." This goes back to the beginning of Japanese Buddhism, but was formalized in the Tokugawa period in order to control and diminish the Christians, whom the shogunate feared as political threats to their own regime and whom they believed to apostasize when required to belong to a Buddhist temple. All residents of the communities should register the whole household at the local Buddhist temple, giving information on birth, marriage, and death. The priest had to take part in this registration by each year issuing a certificate (*tera-ukejō*) to each individual, attesting that the person in question was not a Christian. The *danka seido* naturally was a factor giving further power to the clerics and to Buddhism in general. Forced temple relationships also increased religious activities at the temples, which primarily came to be places to conduct funerals and yearly rituals, both of which were important means of gaining power and income. "From the point of view of *danka* members, their relationship with Buddhism often came to be more formalistic and pragmatic rather than a matter of individual religious conviction" (Marcure 1985, 45), and temple rituals were used "as a tool for social organization, as a means to bring order to the carnivalesque" (Ketelaar 1990, 53). But temples as places for voluntary religious practice also became popular and prayers for this-worldly benefits, and pilgrimage to sacred places (*reijō*) were ways to be Buddhist and religious in a less controlled way (Tamamura 1991, 271). Such activities combined with the *danka seido* and the increase in the funeral business were factors contributing to the popularization and propagation of Zen Buddhism in Japan.

In this period Buddhist sectarian consciousness (*shūtō ishiki*) also grew and became stronger. External factors (the *bakufu*'s restrictive religious policy, influence from Neo-Confucianism, National Learning, and new Shinto movements) were causing the individual sects to redefine themselves. But internal pressure within the Buddhist world too gave rise to this, especially with the emergence of the Ōbaku sect. Many Myōshinji clerics and lay followers converted to this new lineage, and many Myōshinji temples were made Ōbaku branch temples (Baroni 2000, 131), following the "Ingen boom" (ibid. 123), during which Ingen Ryūki (Ch.Yinyuan Longqi, 1592–1673) were even invited to take the office of abbot at the *honzan*. Soon after, when the opposing faction within Myōshinji gained power, the Ōbaku sect was harshly criticized of its false practices (e.g., "Nembutsu Zen"; see Baroni 2000, 5) and "false claims to represent the true Rinzai lineage" (Mohr, 1994, 349).

The patronage of the *bakufu* and local *daimyō* and the construction of Manpukuji in Uji south of Kyoto in 1661, did not make relations much friendlier. The Myōshinji sect responded both with continued criticism and internal encouragement to "return to the origin" in representing the true lineage. Late Tokugawa reforms within both the Sōtō and the Rinzai sects should be seen in this light.

One person who appeared at the right time to sanction this was Hakuin Ekaku 白隠慧鶴 (1689–1768). As a Myōshinji priest he was to become a new head figure in all later Rinzai Zen Buddhism, and he is considered by scholars as well as by Zen Buddhists to be the main character behind all contemporary Rinzai Zen. He is seen as the great master (*zenji*) who both kept to the tradition and yet brought the necessary reform of the declining line. He was a strict master who structured the kōan-system to its present structure but also a popularizer, cultivating the general populace in a language and style that everyone could understand. Just as the dark image of the Tokugawa period is colored by post-Tokugawan eyes, so is the image of Hakuin and "Hakuin Zen" naturally colored by sectarian glorification. It is, however, quite characteristic that many history books on Zen Buddhism—Japanese as well as Western—end with him. Hakuin, thus, was the last patriarch of the "old times," before modernity. He was the necessary figure to end a dark age with a light image, he was the figure to make a passage to the Zen Buddhism of the new world.[22]

1.2 Meiji Zen: Modernization and Invented Traditions

The year 1868 is commonly agreed upon to be the threshold that separated Japanese history into a premodern and a modern era, an era of "illuminated rule" (明治 *meiji*, which is also the name of the period lasting until 1912). Internal as well as external pressures resulted in the turnover of the shogunate and the old stratified society it represented. The Japanese looked further West (and this time not to China) for inspiration for the coming modernity and enlightened age (*bunmei kaika*), and they looked back to reject a long period of their history seen by many to hide true Japanese culture, symbolized by the indigenous Shinto religion and the emperor. Buddhism was turned into a heretic

[22] On some of the information from Myōshinji materials and images of Hakuin, see, e.g., *Zen Q and A*, 75, *Josei no bukkyō* 3, 85, 96–97, 145.

scapegoat. It was seen as an extension of the *bakufu*'s power and as a living symbol of an "ancient evil," as "a powerful, socially pervasive 'other'" (Ketelaar 1990, 50). Especially in the early Meiji years it was accused of being medieval, outdated, ritualistic, superstitious, premodern, anti-rationalistic, too foreign (from India and China), and yet too provincial (not international enough). Buddhism was separated from Shinto (*shimbutsu bunri*) in 1868 and soon lost its state patronage and social status, indicated by the household registries being taken over by local administrative offices. Under the slogan "exterminate the Buddha and destroy Śākyamuni" (廃仏毀釈 *haibutsu kishaku*), temples were shut down, property was confiscated, and it is estimated that 40,000 temples were destroyed (Ketelaar 1990, 7).[23] Also, the Zen sects were affected—especially Rinzai which, as opposed to Sōtō was and is better represented in cities and towns (Takenuki 1992, 287)—and up to 80 percent of the Zen temples in some areas were destroyed (ibid. 277). In some places Buddhist rituals such as *obon* were prohibited (ibid. 276), and funerals were converted into Shinto ceremonies (ibid. 278). Though not officially approved by the Myōshinji sect until 1961, in 1872 a national law gave permission for priests to eat meat and marry (肉食妻帯 *nikujiki saitai*). The decriminalization was seen by many not only to be a pleasant, and now officially recognized, way of constituting a family life in the temple;[24] for many priests the temple wives (*fujin*) were simply a necessary helping hand in the daily keeping of the temple, chores hitherto taken care of by acolytes (小僧 *kozō*), whom the formerly unmarried priest trained and educated. On the other hand, having a family also requires more mouths to be fed, and the financial situation in the temples was often threatened. The status and idea of the temple as an institutional and social "family" changed dramatically, giving way to a new institution based on the nuclear family structure

[23] Ketelaar notes, however, that many of these were actually "halls" (*do*) or "hermitages" (*an*), used only for ceremonies and usually uninhabited, and attacks on them were more easily carried out "because they were the points of least resistance within Buddhist institutions" (1990, 50). In the period after the persecution, some Buddhist temples were re-erected or new ones were built. In a Myōshinji survey, 11.2 percent of the priests responded that the main hall of their temple was built in the period between 1850 and 1900 (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 52).

[24] In reality sexuality and marriage have always had a very interesting and paradoxical nature in all of Buddhist history, including Chan and Zen; see Faure 1998. To the Shin Buddhists, who already allowed these practices, this particular rule had no great impact. Shin Buddhist ideas of lay Buddhism, however, played an important role in opposition to the early Meiji persecution (Ketelaar 1990, 232 n8).

bound together by biological and sexual relations. Thomas Kirchner even suggests that Zen Buddhist pilgrimage, in which it was customary for the monks to stay at local temples during their wanderings, disappeared due to the temples becoming family units (*ie*), where there was a "sharp decrease in the welcome for such unexpected guests" (1996, 40). Other rules were later made to "humanize" the clergy, or to make them adhere to the idea of "equalization of subjects" (*shinmin dōitsu*).[25] They were permitted to let their hair grow and wear civil clothes, and were ordered to follow the same mourning procedures as ordinary citizens. They were also ordered not to abandon their civil surname (which had earlier been the normal procedure), but to use their Buddhist name in religious affairs and their civil name in secular affairs. Buddhist priests were called citizens (*kokumin*) belonging to a household (*ie*) and incorporated into the registration (*koseki*) system, thus considered on the same level as other citizens. Even control over the entrance into monastic life was handled by the government. This later had the result that no requests for ordination were required; notifying the local authorities was enough. Decriminalization and rules of degradation of the clergy was both a problem to the clergy and a strategic maneuver from the government. It became a living symbol of "the culmination of a growing animosity towards Buddhism" (Jaffe 2001, 5), where one could hardly distinguish between clergy and lay, being only different in degree and not in kind (ibid. 4). Some gave up their profession, some turned into Shinto priests, and many of those remaining in the Buddhist clergy were to be humanized and rationalized, lay-oriented and "this-worldly." The clergy "ceased to be considered those who 'had left home and abandoned life' (出家脱俗 *shukke datsuzoku*)" (ibid. 32), and the whole idea behind concepts such as *shukke* ("leaving home"), *zaike* ("living at home"), and *genzoku* ("returning to laity") were problematic and, as we shall later see, not as clear as they were before the Meiji restoration.

Another way of controlling the clergy and Buddhist institutions was through education. In 1871 (until 1884), the Ministry of State established a system of doctrinal teaching, the "Great Teaching" (大教 *Daikyō*). Its headquarters (大教院 Daikyōin, "Great Teaching Assembly") was placed in a Buddhist temple in Tokyo and turned into a nationalist, imperial center for promoting and practicing Shinto and imperial

[25] See Jaffe 2001 for a more thorough description of these aspects.

ideology. Through this the general unenlightened public should be guided and enlightened by authorized instructors (教導職 *kyōdōshoku*), mostly by Shinto and Buddhist priests. The necessity for the latter, in becoming an instructor, to actually be allowed to function as a priest shows the attempt of making it a veiled de facto state priesthood (Ketelaar 1990, 99). A survey dated 1880 shows that there had been over 103,000 instructors, over 81,000 of whom were members of Buddhist sects (ibid. 105).[26]

Buddhist responses

Although there is naturally always a danger of exaggerating the effects and meanings in the passage from one period to another, there is no doubt that the Meiji era did change the Japanese Buddhist world. Thomas Kirchner, who spent nearly thirty years in Rinzai Zen monasteries, says that changes from the Meiji times are still spoken of in the present-day Rinzai temple world (Kirchner 1996, 39). However, "modern" and "premodern" are not terms defining distinct periods or cultural modes. As Kiba points out, such "periods" can live side by side and coexist within the same institution, even within the same individual (1996, 37). Neither are they value-free and objective terms, but concepts used in discourses to explain and often justify either of the positions, an operation which itself was used to generate social and religious change. More than being an attempt to write history, discourse on Tokugawa Buddhist decadence and corruption (堕落論 *darakuron*) was as much an ideological justification of its critics, an invention of a pure (純粋 *junsui*) and original (根本 *konpon*) Buddhism, a legitimation of a unified reformist New Buddhism (新仏教 *shin bukkyō*) or of the many new sects that appeared in this period. Other attempts were made to restore its position as a state religion, using primarily Christianity as the common enemy of the Buddhist world (Thelle 1987) or in internationalizing and universalizing Buddhism as a rational, spiritual, and scientific World Religion. Some Japanese Buddhists went abroad, returning inspired by the waves of the "Buddhist modernity" and the academic skills they acquired in interpreting Buddhist texts and the art of how to reinterpret the concept "religion" (宗教 *shūkyō*). *Shūkyō* had earlier been used in Buddhist history as "sect teachings,"

[26] The first president (院長 *inchō*) was a Zen Buddhist from Shōkokuji (Kimura 1984, 215). Also, Imakita Kōsen was a *kyōdōshoku* (Sharf 1995, 112).

and Meiji politicians and the anti-Buddhist rhetoric used religion as a negative concept associated with superstition. "Separation of rule and doctrine" (政教分離 *seikyō bunri*) was for the Meiji government identical to the separation of religion and politics, and a strategic anti-syncretic separation of Buddhism and Shinto.[27] The Christian- and Western-inspired article on religious freedom (信仰の自由 *shinkō no jiyū*) in the Meiji constitution promulgated in 1889 signified a new discourse on religion in mid-Meiji.[28]

The World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago 1893 in many ways was the symptom and the generative turning point of what in the long run made the Japanese Buddhists turn from heretics to martyrs (Ketelaar 1990). Rinzai priest and master (師家 *shike*) from Engakuji in Kamakura, Shaku Sōen 釋宗演 (Kogaku Sōen 1859–1919), was one of the Japanese representatives. He had earlier been a monk in Ceylon, where he became familiar with and inspired by theosophy and Buddhist reformism, and the parliament and his later stays in America with his lay disciple Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō (D. T. Suzuki) were the most significant events in internationalizing and propagating Zen to the West (Faure 1993, Sharf 1993). This success also rebounded back in Japan, the "Suzuki effect" (Faure 1993, 11) being based on an "invented tradition" and itself expressing an interesting variant of what Bharati (1970, 270) called the "pizza-effect"—the transformation of shape and meaning of an exported and re-imported product (Borup 2004).

Zen and Myōshinji developments

In Zen circles, Pure Zen (純粋禅 *junsui zen*) was found in classical Chinese Chan (the golden age of "classic Zen") or in Kamakura and, most often, in Muromachi Zen. It was also promoted as a potential ideal in modern Zen Buddhism, and several attempts were made to write Zen history, defining the "essence" of Zen. Zen was to be both historical and modern, beyond time and space. The study of Zen (禅学 *zengaku*)

---

[27] Shinto was from the beginning of the Meiji period until the end of the Second World War not defined as a religion but as a state institution whose ritual practices were considered to be patriotic duties of all Japanese (Mullins 1993, 77).

[28] Article 28 reads: "Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejuridical to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief" (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 162). Religious freedom turned out to be a rather empty slogan, rhetorically counterbalancing other more antidemocratic post-Tokugawan slogans.

was created, and already at that time there was a talk about a "Zen Boom" (Kirita 1996, 113).

While attempts to make a unified Buddhism (通仏教 *tsū bukkyō*) were expressed in ecumenical associations and texts,[29] political maneuvers and sectarian consciousness also contributed to institutional changes. In 1872 the three Zen sects Rinzai, Ōbaku, and Sōtō were united into one by the Ministry of Doctrine, to be separated again two years later by the same ministry into Sōtō and Rinzai, and again in 1876 allowing Ōbaku status as an independent sect. Myōshinji had already in 1871 installed its own abbot (管長 *kanchō*) before having to abolish it again the year after due to the unification of the sects, after which a priest from Tenryūji and later Myōshinji functioned as *kanchō*. In 1874, not only the main sects (宗 *shū*) but also the sect-branches (派 *ha*) within the sects were given the right to appoint their own *kanchō*. This gave both Buddhist institutions the legal right to have their own state independent leader as well as the possibility for local temples to have equal status with the sects of which they had formerly been dependent sub-branches. In 1876 the Rinzai sect split up into nine (and later fourteen) independent branches, each with their own appointed *kanchō*. In 1884 these were further given the power to appoint and dismiss clergy within the sects (Kimura 1984, 217). The same year, after the central administrative complex Daikyōin was abolished, compiling sectarian constitutions (*shūsei*), temple rules (*jihō*), and rules and guidelines for lay organization (*kyōkai kessha jōrei*) was made mandatory by the Council of State (Ikeda 1998, 13, 27). Myōshinji had its own headquarters of educational and religious affairs (教務本所) *kyōmu honjo* later in 1930 to be transformed into the headquarters for sect affairs, *shūmu honjo* (宗務本所). 1884 was also the year of the first general sect meeting (*shūgikai*), at which the first charter of the constitution (*kenshō*) was agreed upon, finally to be published six years later. In 1889, on the second general assembly, all the temples of the sect were divided into fifteen districts—and in 1894 into twenty-five—each with its own superintendent (*torishimari*). In 1891 the first issue of the institutional organ *Shōbōrin* (正法輪) was published. Educational institutions sprang up, some of them modeled after Western

---

[29] Ketelaar 1990, 207 translates *bukkyō seiten* (仏教聖典) as "Buddhist Bibles." Though "Buddhist scriptures" might be a more neutral translation, Christian and ecumenical influence were indeed important factors. Such unified and ecumenical scriptures are still produced. In 1987 a *Zen Seiten* (禅聖典, "Zen Scriptures") was produced by the Joined Missionary Organization of all Rinzai Sects (*Rinzaishū Rengō Kakuha Fukyōdan*).

ideals, some inspired by Buddhist ideas,[30] others remaining within Buddhist institutions. In 1872 Myōshinji established its own school, Hannyarin (般若林 "Wisdom Forest"), in a subtemple at the *honzan*. As a small seminary functioning as an extra-educational dimension to the monastic training, student monks (of which there were seventy the first year) studied Chinese classics and the history and teachings of the sect (Kimura 1984, 221). The school was later split into several temples (1883), moved outside the *honzan* (1898), split into religious (*senmon sōdō*) and ordinary (*futsū*) schools (1894), and changed its name to Hanazono Gakurin (花園学林, 1903), Hanazono Gakuin (花園学院, 1907), Rinzaishū Daigaku (臨済宗大学, 1911), and finally into the present Hanazono Daigaku (花園大学, 1949). The most prominent prewar presidents of the university were Shaku Sōen (1914–17) and Gotō Zuigan (1932–44).[31]

Lay Zen

A keyword in all Buddhist modernity was, and still is, the focus on the role of lay Buddhism, *zaike bukkyō* (在家仏教). Juridicially sanctioned laws had already cleared the path to rearrange the relationship between the former division between monks and lay persons, but also several initiatives were made from within the Buddhist clergy to meet the new circumstances. Sōen Shaku and his master Imakita Kōsen (1816–92) are often referred to as the creators of lay Zen and of *zazenkai*, meditation groups for lay people. Both *zazen* and sutra reading had been almost exclusively a business for monastic life. The opening of the meditation halls for noncleric people was a signal to embrace and be more open to the masses (大衆 *taishū*) and a typical element of Buddhist modernity and its focus on meditative experience (Sharf, 1995b). *Taishū Zen* ("Zen for the masses") has been used to describe how Zen was acculturated into different times and places of its history. But it was not until the beginning of the Meiji period that the concept came to have an actual significance as a realistic ideal of opening the doors to the "outside"—or to let the masses come inside the monastic world. Many new

---

[30] E.g., Tetsugakkan, a school for philosophical studies, was founded by Inoue Enryo in 1887. His rationalistic interpretation—and at times nationalistic promotion—of Buddhism was later taken up more successfully by the famous Kyoto School of Zen Buddhist-inspired philosophers.

[31] Gotō Zuigan was the eldest disciple of Shaku Sōkatsu. He followed Sōkei-an to America, and was a teacher for Ruth Fuller Sasaki (Fields 1992).

lay groups and assemblies were made in the years following the Meiji era, being either sectarian or transsecterian, for specific age groups or with specific themes or practices.[32] During the Meiji period,[33] also the Myōshinji sect had a lay organization established, the Hanazono Kyōkai (花園教会), "Hanazono Lay Organization"), to become, in 1942, the present-day Hanazonokai. In the 1884 charter of the constitution, the regulations for the organization stated its purpose to be propagating Buddhism, paying respect to emperor Hanazono, and strengthening the faith (*shinjin*) of the believers (*danshin, Hanazonokai 100 nen*, 5). Though primarily an organization for the lay parish, the priest and his wife too were and are members, and one of its aims was and is to keep friendly relations between the *honzan* and the local temples (*Kenshū no shiori*, 24). In 1891 the first issue of the parish magazine *Hana no Sonō* (花の園) appeared, later to change its name to *Mishō* (微笑, published monthly from 1924), and eventually to its present name *Hanazono* 花園, from 1951. The opening ceremony of Hanazono Kyōkai was held at the *honzan* in 1893 (*Hanazonokai 100 nen*, 8). To help find solutions to the problems of defining and fulfilling the new roles as temple wives, local groups started holding small assemblies, the first being in Kōbe in 1892 (ibid. 8). Although the term "priest wife" (*jitei fujin*) was not officially recognized until after the war, in 1918 the first general assembly of the Hanazono Fujinkai was held (ibid. 24). Memorials of Hanazono and Kaizan were also used to manifest sectarian consciousness and to attract attention of the public. Commemorating their 550th death anniversaries in 1895 and 1909, respectively 8,500 and 20,000 lay members participated in ceremonies, and 500 monks conducted a memorial *sesshin* (Kimura 1984, 223).

[32] E.g., Sōtō Fushūkai ("Sōtō Sect Aid Society," led by the influential Ōuchi Seiran), Hanseikai ("Association of Self-Reflection"), the Spiritualist (Seishin Shugi) movement led by the Shin Buddhist Kiyosawa Manshi, youth groups such as Young Men's Buddhist Association (Y.M.B.A, originally started with the help of the theosophist colonel Olcott), and *Juzenkai*, "Organization of the Ten Good Precepts."

[33] There seems to be some ambiguity as to the year of its establishment. *Kenshū no shiori*, 24 says in the middle of the Meiji period, *Zen Q & A*, 194 and *Hanazono Q & A*, 108 say in the beginning, the latter referring to a hundredth anniversary held in 1988. This occasion was marked by a anniversary publication (*Hanazonokai 100 nen*) in 1991, which, however, seems to set the year as 1891. Other publications only mention it as a postwar organization (e.g., *Josei no bukkyō* 2, 149).

1.3 Postwar and Contemporary Myōshinji Zen

The end of the war again brought a new era to Japanese society. The nation had to be rebuilt on the ashes of a devastated country, and the image of religion had to be redefined. Although this time it was Shinto ending up as the heretics of religious Japan, many Buddhist sects and individuals too had participated in the nationalistic propaganda or directly taken part in the war, some of them being—to use Tambiah's term from a different context—a lot more "world conquerors" than "world renouncers" (1976).[34] Myōshinji was no exception, contributing to the war with nationalistic statements and donations of two fighter aircrafts to the army.[35] Although individuals such as Ichikawa Hakugen (1902–86, priest and professor at Hanazono Daigaku) and Brian Victoria have since raised criticism of the roles in which Zen was used in what was also termed "imperial-state Zen" (*kōkoku zen*) and "soldier Zen" (*gunjin Zen*), matters of wartime guilt are still unsettled and delicate for the Myōshinji sect.[36] After the war many temples lost important sources of income due to the new land reforms, which deprived especially temples in the countryside the right to the land that they formerly had rented

[34] One of the only sects that really can be excluded from this was Sōka Gakkai, whose antimilitarism has since earned it a status of being wartime "clean." Interestingly, barrister and founder of the Buddhist society in London Christmas Humphreys (1901–83) served as a judge in the War Ministry, participating in the tribunal in Tokyo after the war. Off duty he met his personal friend D. T. Suzuki and visited many priests and temples to propagate his "Twelve Principles of Buddhism," a project attempting to cultivate and accomplish colonel Olcott's "Fourteen Fundamental Principles" (Humphreys 1978).

[35] These were called *Rinzai* and *Hanazono Myōshinji* (*Hanazonokai 100 nen*, 52). See Victoria's *Zen at War* (1997), esp. 50–52.

[36] On Ichikawa Hakugen, see Victoria 1997, 166–74 and Ives 1992, 90–94. While the "High Treason Incident" in 1910 (in which a Rinzai priest, Mineo Setsudō, with other priests was imprisoned for alleged conspiracy in killing members of the imperial family, *Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 33–37) and emperor worship (ibid. 7–31) to a certain extent has been discussed, wartime Rinzai Zen still awaits thorough institutional debate. See Victoria 1997 and 2003 on Zen and war. See also Heisig and Maraldo 1995 on the question of Japanese Buddhism and nationalism. In 2002 an official apology came to the Dutchman and Zen Buddhist Ina Buitendijk, whose husband was a detainee in the Dutch Indies (presently Indonesia) under Japanese military rule. Having read Victoria's book she wrote letters to Zen Buddhist leaders in Japan, asking for explanations and apologies. Kono Taitsu Rōshi and Shōdō Harada Rōshi from Myōshinji responded, the former having used the theme for many dharma talks. A symposium on the theme (*heiwa e no michi*) was held at Myōshinji, and the subject was referred to in two of its journals (*Shōbōrin* 54, 6:1–10 and *Hanazono* Sept. 2004: 4) and on the website http://www.myoshin.com/guide/declaration.html the issue is described and a peace declaration from Myōshinji is stated.

out to local farmers. Also, large numbers of adherents were leaving the sects, either because of the new freedom to choose or reject religious affiliation or because of the general urbanization in which many temples suffered from the lack of earlier obligatory affiliation. A new time had again pressed Japanese Buddhism to find and redefine itself at home, internationally, within its own institution, toward other institutions, and toward its lay members.

Judicial and institutional structure of religious organizations

Already in 1899, the Civil Code Enforcement Law (民法施行法 *minpō shikō hō*) opened for the possibility for Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, and in principle all kinds of organizations, to become "juridical persons" or "religious corporations."[37]

In 1939 the Diet enacted the Religious Organizations Law (宗教団体法 *shūkyō dantai hō*), which classified Shrine Shinto organizations as public religious corporations and Buddhist temples as private religious corporations, resulting in recognition of thirteen Sect Shinto groups, twenty-eight Buddhist sects (compared to the earlier fifty-six), and two Christian organizations (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 163). These registered and recognized religious groups had certain privileges, but, being controlled and regulated by the government, they were also to become more directly entangled in and dependent on state policy. Also, the law gave the state authority to disband any religious organization potentially in conflict with "The Imperial Way," and in general the *shūkyō dantai hō* was "an instrument for obstructing religious freedom" (ibid. 164).

After Japan's defeat in August 1945, the Occupation forces issued the Directive for the Disestablishment of State Shinto. The former bond between state and religion was to be cut for good. On the one hand, Shinto was "humanized," and like all other religions it came to be on equal footing with all other organizations. On the other hand, Shinto, by becoming one religion among others, was (again) sacralized as a this-worldly institution but with ties not only to top politicians but also to an otherworldly realm now separate from the state. Again, the concept of religion was deeply influenced and imposed by Western assumptions

---

[37] Though the Japanese Ministry of Education translates *hōjin* as *juridical person*, I follow John LoBreglio's suggestion of using the more common equivalent to the judicial translation, *religious corporation* (1997, 38n).

of "true religion." This is also manifested in the new law regulating and defining religious matters, the *shukyō hōjin hō* (宗教法人法). The *shukyō hōjin hō* (Religious Juridical Persons Law, or Religious Corporation Law) was enacted and came into force on April 3, 1951. As a replacement of the former Religious Bodies Law, or Religious Organizations Law (*shukyō dantai hō*) from 1939, and as a fulfillment of the provisional Religious Juridical Persons Ordinance (*shūkyō hōjin rei*) from 1945, the *shūkyō hōjin hō* came to be the legally constituted framework in which religious organizations have had to define themselves. The law guarantees religious freedom and autonomy as well as separation of church and state. Though it is not obligatory for a religious organization to become a religious corporation in judicial terms, most persons or organizations do so due to the tax exemptions and other privileges (see below).[38] Article one in the *shūkyō hōjin hō* aims at giving legal capacity to possess and carry out "business affairs and enterprises for the achievement of their purposes."[39] The ambiguity of what is considered "religious" has naturally been a matter of constant debate and interpretation. That there in the constitution is an implicit "understanding of religion as something essentially good which acts as a positive force in society" (LoBreglio 1997, 38) was seriously questioned with the Aum Shinrikyō incident, which brought this debate into focus, causing a revision of the law in 1995.[40] The focus on individual choice and religious belief clearly shows the influence of contemporary American definitions and understandings of religion. Article one stresses the freedom of faith (*shinkyō no jiyū*), and in article two the quintessence of

---

[38] In 1993 the number of religious groups in Japan were approximately 230,000 (LoBreglio 1997, 39), of which 182,641 in 2004 statistics from the Agency for Cultural Affairs are incorporated under the *hōjin hō* law (http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/pdf/chapter_10.pdf).

[39] The 1995 edition of the *shūkyō hōjin hō* is printed in its full text in the *Myōshinjiha Shūsei* (1997, 491–530). An English translation of the old *hōjin hō* can be found in Ministry of Education 1951, and revisions to the law in Agency for Cultural Affairs 1996 and LoBreglio 1997. See also Covell 2005, 149–51.

[40] "The assumption that religion functions positively in society was undermined dramatically and lawmakers were forced to acknowledge publicly what everyone already knows: that there are people and groups who abuse the privileges of the Religious Corporation Law" (LoBreglio 1997, 39). On the other hand, many people (in a survey from 1995 it was 65, nine percent of the respondents, Ishii 1997a, 177) feel that the Aum incident was (only) a particular incident, and Kisala (1997, 64) says that "in the end the whole debate seemed to be aimed more at Sōka Gakkai than Aum." As the revisions do not have direct influence on this project, these will not be further discussed. See Agency for Cultural Affairs 1996 and feature articles in Japanese Religions 1997 22,1.

religion is specified by defining religious organizations (*shūkyō dantai*) as those "whose primary purposes consist in the dissemination of religious teachings, the conduct of ceremonies and functions, and in the education and nurture of believers."[41]

In the legal constitution of the Myōshinji sect (宗制 *Shūsei*),[42] religious teachings and ceremonies are defined generally in the "essentials," especially in articles two ("doctrines or teachings," *shūshi oyobi kyōgi*), three ("religious tradition," *shūfū*), and nine and ten (dealing with *hōyō*, memorial services). Rules and ideals for religious education are treated in several articles, including school education (ibid. 344–50), mission (ibid. 361–78), and cultivation (ibid. 401–4).

Myōshinji institutional structure

In the Religious Corporation Law the relationship between sect and individual temples is also defined. Local religious corporations (単位宗教団体 *tan'i shūkyō dantai*) include individual temples (*ji-in. Dōjō* are included in this category), churches (*kyōkai*), and monasteries (*shūdō-in*) as places for worship, whereas denominations (*kyōha*) and sects (*shūha*), associations (*kyōdan*), churches (*kyōkai*), orders (*shūdōkai*), and dioceses or districts (*shikyōku*) are defined as comprehensive religious organizations (宗教包括団体 *shūkyō hōkatsu dantai*). Over ninety-five percent of the local religious corporations belong to the comprehensive organizations and are called comprehended religious organizations (*hi hōkatsu shūkyō dantai*), and the remaining few independent corporations are called autonomous religious organizations (単立宗教団体 *tanritsu shūkyō dantai*). After the war some Buddhist temples formerly belonging

[41] Religious teachings (*kyōgi*) are explained in a guidebook for Rinzai Zen priests (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 108) to be doctrines (宗旨 *shūshi*), or sect-teachings (宗乗 *shūjō*), and the content of belief (信仰内容 *shinkō naiyō*). Ceremonies or rituals (儀式行事 *gishiki gyōji*) are explained as "religious belief given shape in ceremonial religious practice" (108). Religious education (教化 *kyōka*) is defined as "making believers believe in the doctrines of the religious organization," and nurture (育成 *ikusei*) as "gradually deepening this attitude in life" (ibid.).

[42] According to the *shūkyō hōjin hō* it is compulsory for every religious organization to have its own regulations (*kisoku*). The Myōshinji constitution (*Shūsei*) counts as such, and it includes the *shūkō* (the "essentials," the cardinal doctrines or principles of the sect [*Zengaku Daijiten*, 483]) and the more general rules and regulations (*kitei*) on aspects such as the name, purpose, location, offices, official representatives, administration, property, etc. (also defined in the *shūkyō hōjin hō* article 12). The constitution is considered to be the topmost sectarian authority (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 110). Apart from the edition from 1997, I have had access to the editions from 1896, 1941, and 1981.

to larger organizations became independent institutions,[43] but most are local units of larger Buddhist institution. There are twenty-two organizations ascribing themselves to the Zen lineage—fifteen within the Rinzai, one each of the Ōbaku and Sōtō sects, and five independent organizations. The Ōbaku and each of the Rinzai sects have their own head or main temple (本山 *honzan*, "root mountain") functioning as administrative and symbolic center—the Sōtō sect is particular in having two of such (Eiheiji and Sōjiji). Thus Myōshinjiha as a sect/branch (*shūha*, or *shūmon* 宗門) is the overall comprehensive religious organization, while the physical main temple (大本山 *daihonzan*, or 本寺 *honji*) in Kyoto, Shōbōsan Myōshinji, itself is a local religious body. As the *honzan* it contains both the Seven Halls (see below) and the administrative headquarters (*shūmu honjō*, which had its own building established just next to the *honzan* in 1970) as well as other departments and offices in which all (male) employees have a clerical title and wear Buddhist robes.[44] It is surrounded by forty-six subtemples (*tacchū*), and is the site of origin of the 3,500 regional temples (*matsuji*) in twenty-seven parishes (*kyōzu*) in Japan (and a handful of temples outside Japan, 別院 *betsuin*) belonging to the Myōshinji sect.[45] The institutional relationship between the headquarters and the local temples (*honkatsu kankei*) thus has its physical equivalent in the relationship between the main temple and the regional branch temples (*honmatsu kankei*). These are placed within a hierarchical structure organized in a pyramid, with the *honzan* and *kanchō* at the peak followed by lower levels of temples and priests, all of whom are graded in schemes of power and status.

Both the subtemples and the local branch temples are dependent on institutional affiliation, they pay annual fees to the *honzan*, and the

[43] Names of Rinzai temples that became independent temples after the war are listed in Nara and Nishimura 1979, 194–96. Some of these (e.g., Ichibataji, the *honzan* of the Ichibata Yakushi Kyōdan) still consider themselves to belong to the Myōshinji sect (personal correspondence).

[44] The departments include the Dept. of General Affairs (*sōmubu*), the Head Office (*hōmu honjō*), the Dept. of Financial Affairs (*zaimubu*), the Hanazono Head Office (*Hanazonokai honbu*), and the Dept. of Religious Affairs (*shūmubu*).

[45] In comparison, there are a total of about 21,000 Zen temples, 6,000 of which belong to the Rinzai Zen lineage (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1999, 72). Apart from these legally declared religious corporations, there are six "churches," *kyōkai*, within the Myōshinji sect. These are also religious institutions, but are considered too small to be considered temples, and they have no affiliated lay members, *danka*s. For a full list of all Rinzai and ōbaku temples, see *Jiin meikan*; for an illustrated description of the main temples of the sects, see Abe 1996.

priests from the subtemples are generally expected to meet at ceremonies conducted at the *honzan*. But the temples (both the *matsuji* and the *tacchū*) are also all independent religious bodies (*hōjin*) with their own rights and responsibility in financial, political, and religious matters. Being part of the same institution and even situated within the same large temple precincts they appear as small independent units in an enclosed religious society. The extent to which the individual priest wants to study or have *zazenkai*, whether he wants to get married, lead a kindergarten, or have a side-job is purely a matter of personal choice.[46]

Zen temples

Most of the 3,500 local temples belonging to the Myōshinji sect are based in towns and smaller cities, though some ten percent are situated in larger cities.[47]

The size, history, and symbolic importance of the main temple in Kyoto make it a rather untypical Zen temple. It is called the "root temple" (本寺 *honji*) or the "root mountain" (本山 *honzan*), being the symbolic power center of the entire Myōshinji sect.[48] The surrounding forty-six subtemples (塔頭 *tacchū*) were originally built to support and protect the main temple, but today they function as all of the other local branch-temples (末寺 *matsuji*) scattered around the country. The main temple is characterized like ideally all other Zen temples by its "seven halls" (七伽藍 *shichi garan*), another name for the Zen Buddhist sangha, being equivalent to other related concepts such as the monk's grove (僧林 *sōrin*) or garden (僧園 *sōen*) in which the Zen monks cultivate their progress. The "field of merit" (福田 *fududen*) is a metaphor known in all Buddhism as a field of exchange between human and superhuman beings as well as between lay people and monks. It is a

[46] As in other Buddhist countries there are general and specific rules of conduct and of sanctions and punishment. Apart from the monks in training, whose conduct can more easily be followed and controlled, regulations for the clergy outside the training halls are more difficult to control. The constitution does have different measures of punishment, from exclusion to repentance and warnings (*Shūsei*, 320–35), but actual punishments seem to be very rare.

[47] *Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 2. Another survey (*Jūshoku chōsa*, 51), situated 843 temples (35.2%) in towns and villages, 1,049 (44%) in smaller and larger cities, and 212 (8.9%) in the thirteen largest cities of Japan.

[48] In medieval times, "mountain" was chosen as the metaphor of politically arranging Zen temple institutions (as in *gozan*), and "mountain" is the metaphor still identifying each temple in its formal name, as is the case with *Shōbōzan Myōshinji*. Even city temples have always been seen as mountain retreats (Collcutt 1981, 182).

field where people's needs of happiness are sown (*Gendai jiin yōkun*, 70), where one can sow religious effort and later harvest religious benefits.[49] Nature metaphors have always had a hold on Chan/Zen discourse and monastic layout, and the garden metaphor has a special significance in the Myōshinji sect, where the main temple (but also Myōshinji temples in general) is described as a "flower garden," Hanazono (花園), the name of the emperor who gave the land to the temple complex. The "flower garden" both suggests an idea of "paradise" and extends the metaphor of cultivation.

Consisting of the Buddha hall (仏殿 *butsuden*), the dharma hall (法堂 *hattō*, the head), the training hall for monks (僧堂 *sōdō*), the kitchen (庫裏 *kuri*), the latrines, referred to either as the "eastern office" (東司 *tōsu*) or the "western purity" (西浄 *seijin* or *seijō*), and the bathroom (浴室 *yokushitsu*), the seven halls constitute the symbolic and "essential minimum skeleton of the Zen monastery" (Collcutt 1981, 186), often illustrated as a human body depicting the ideal structural relationships between the elements of an organic whole.[50] Apart from these "classic" elements, the Myōshinji *honzan* also contains stupas (塔 *tō*), the bell tower (*shōrō*), the storage room for sutras (*kyōzō*), the founder's hall (*kaizandō*, also called *Mishō-an*), the memorial hall for emperor Hanazono (*Gyokuhō-in*), a shrine for tutelary deities (*chinju-dō*), the memorial hall for the remains of the ancestors of the lay member (*ihai-dō*), and the larger and smaller abbot's buildings (方丈 *hōjō*). The Myōshinji main temple complex is not only a site for tourists, though the buildings and some of the gardens of the surrounding temples are historically interesting and aesthetically beautiful attractions; it is also the center of religious practice for the members of the institution. The important event of going to the main temple (本山参拝 *honzan sanpai*) is a spiritual journey

---

[49] The field of merit is sometimes split into three (*sanfukuden*): the field of gratitude, the field of respect, and the field of compassion. On early Buddhism and the "unsurpassed field of merit," see Freiberger 2000. On the Buddhist robe as a field of merit, see Faure 1995a, 356.

[50] The origin of the anthropomorphically constructed layout is not known, but the Myōshinji scholar Mujaku Dōchū (1653–1745) used it, as did other of his contemporaries (Collcutt 1981, 184). The pictorial representations are later innovations, but still used in both Sōtō and Myōshinji materials. See *Zen Q & A*, 133, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 107, *Josei no bukkyō* 4, 99, Collcott 1981, 185 and SSSMC 1991, 14, the latter being a guidebook for Sōtō Zen priests. The symbolism invites structuralist analyses of the interpreter, but it seems not to be implanted in the heads of the agents. I asked several priests and visitors about it, but either they did not have an idea of its "meaning" or they simply had never heard of it.

from the periphery to the religious center and the institutional "power station" of Myōshinji. Participants can deepen their faith and experience a feeling of togetherness and identity (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 214) by seeing the "main mountain" and circumambulating the buildings, and the main temple complex and headquarters can promote sectarian consciousness and have its central position emphasized.[51]

Once all Zen temples were also *dōjō*, like the traditional Buddhist idea of a *vihara*, a temple-monastery.[52] Modern temples are family temples as opposed to monasteries with monks. They are all small units, some of them consisting of buildings, rooms, or parts of rooms in principle representing, or actually being traces of, complete seven-halls temples. Most contemporary Myōshinji temples have between two and six buildings within the temple precincts; a minority have ten or more.[53] There is usually a gate (*sanmon*), and a main hall (*hondō*) for all ritual activities serves as a compressed dharma and Buddha hall in which also enshrined memorial tablets may have their own enclosure. The kitchen and toilet these days are usually part of the living quarters, though outdoor toilets are still often seen. Usually the temple will also have its own graveyard (墓 *haka* or 墓地 *bochi*) and perhaps a small shrine for a special Bodhisattva (e.g., Jizō or Kannon) or a Shinto *kami*. Very few Rinzai Zen temples have their own *zendō*, or special room for *zazen*. When *zazenkai* are held it will typically be in the *hondō*.

The common term for a Buddhist temple is *ji-in* (寺院), or *tera* (寺, from Pali *thera*, meaning "elder," and etymologically the source of the Theravada school). Smaller temples might be called *an* (庵), originally a "hermitage," indicating the solitude of individual monks who did not take part in the monastic community.[54] To identify the temple as a sectarian institution it is sometimes called a *zen-dera* (禅寺), or *zen-in*, just as markers such as city temple (*tokai ji-in*), local temple (*chihō ji-in*),

---

[51] There is even an organ taking care of promoting such visits to the *honzan* (*Honzan Sampai Suishin Hombu Iinkai*).

[52] A *vihara* is a "pure abode" (*shōja*), a temple where *shukke* live, the dwelling place for persons of refined religious practice (*seishurengyō*), *Zengaku daijiten*, 551.

[53] 15.1% of the priests in a survey said they had two buildings related to the temple, 16.7% had three, 17.9% had four, 13.5% had five, 9.3% had six, and 6.1% had ten or more (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 54).

[54] In Korea hermitages are still used for their "original" purposes for individuals, permanently (typically the Son masters or what Buswell calls the "meditation monks," 1992, 203, 214), or periodically (going for retreat to deepen their ascetic practices, ibid. 190, 199, 203).

farm-village temple (*nōson ji-in*), or even Kyoto temple (*kyōto jiin*) might be stressed to underline geographical context.

Zen temples are often classified according to function, some of which are naturally overlapping in the same temple. In an introductory book for priest wives four such kinds of temples are specified, though not actually explained: *bodaiji, kitōdera, shugyōdera*, and *kankōdera*.[55] The *bodaiji* (菩提寺) was traditionally a temple at which rituals were performed for the Buddhahood (*bodai*) of the person to whom the temple was dedicated. It has later come to mean temples at which memorial services for deceased ancestors are conducted, and they are sometimes also referred to as *ekōdera* (回向寺) or *ekōin*, temples transferring merit (回向 *ekō*), or *dannadera* (檀那寺), temples within the temple registration system (*terauke*) to which all *danka* should belong and in practice still do. *Kitōdera* (祈祷寺 or *kitōin*) are "prayer temples" in which believers come to achieve this-worldly benefits (*genze riyaku, Josei no bukkyō* 4, 97). Though both *bodaiji* and *kitōdera* are "ordinary temples" (*ippan ji-in*) constituting the vast majority of Zen Buddhist temples,[56] the latter also denote religious practice popular for "users" without a fixed affiliation, and in this sense contrary to the religious practice based on "automatic" affiliation of the *danka* system. The *shugyōdera* (修行寺) is "a temple with the role of having a training hall for religious practice" (*shugyō dōjō*, ibid.). As there are only twenty special training halls for monks (*senmon dōjō*, see them all listed in *Hanazono Q & A*, 72–73) in the Myōshinji sect (and thirty-three in all the Rinzai sects), this category is more restricted, though the word training hall in principle can include also rooms only periodically being used in, for instance, *zazenkai* meetings. The *kankōdera* (観光寺) is a temple known for being a "tourist temple," which is most often also a more or less museumized "old temple" (古寺 *koji*). Though many of the contemporary Myōshinji temples are built after World War II, a significant number were established centuries before,[57] and especially in Kyoto there are quite a few Rinzai Zen temples famous for gardens, historic buildings, or collections of Buddhist art, some of which are

[55] *Josei no bukkyō* 4, 97. See also Nara and Nishimura 1979, 197–98.

[56] *Bodaiji*, or *dannadera*, constituted 95% of Sōtō Zen temples also in Tokugawa Japan (Williams 2005, 13).

[57] In a survey from Myōshinji, 2.7% of the priests responded that the main building of the temple was built earlier than the sixteenth century. Four percent were from the sixteenth century, 17.3% from the seventeenth century, 8.6% from the eighteenth century, 18.3% from the nineteenth, 17.3% from 1901 to 1950, and 26.5% were built after 1950.

designated as "important cultural property." In Myōshinji there are temples considered especially important, such as the temple founded by emperor Hanazono, which itself belongs to the category of *monzeki* 門跡), "a temple founded or inhabited by an ordained ex-emperor, prince or princess" (Inagaki 1988, 210). Other temples attract tourists by art performances, natural scenery, or special ceremonies or markets.[58] When temples are designated as centers for cultural importance they have a larger flow of people and thus the possibility to speculate in the dynamic merging of tourism and pilgrimage, of temple "members" and "users." It is of course always a matter of compromise to which extent the priest and his community want to commercialize the temple, but developing tourism and pilgrimage (as well as selling charms and souvenirs, etc.) seems to be generally accepted as both means of income as well as means to attract more activity and engagement. Within the *honzan* there are two *tacchū* temples (Daishin-in and Tōrin-in) functioning as *shukubō*, temple lodging. Often they are used by guests visiting the *honzan* for ceremonies, or by tourists wishing a religious and historical atmosphere.

Another way of categorizing temples is the institutionally defined temple ranking system. Temple rank (寺班 *jihan*) is bestowed upon each temple of the sect by a group of five persons (the "temple rank examination assembly") appointed by the institutional "parliament" (*shūgikai*). The criteria, or parameters, for judgment are qualifications such as size and history of the temple, its economic situation, the number and activities of its members, and the overall position of the temple.[59] Being a "historic temple" or having a famous priest in its genealogy makes it more prestigious, as do the demands to the personality and qualifications of the future priest. Though in the latest edition of the temple dictionary they have been omitted (in order to eliminate discrimination), the temple ranks are markers of identity and status. Contrary to the ranking system of individuals, both upward and downward mobility is possible, though not that realistic in practice. Inheriting a prestigious temple also means inheriting a prestigious temple rank.

[58] E.g., there have been *nō* performances at Tenryūji, dragon dance at *obon* at Manpukuji, and Daruma markets at different places in the country. There are often tea performances at Daitokuji, and most larger main temples have moon-viewing in autumn and "summer airing" (*mushiboshi*) of sutras or art scrolls.

[59] On the rules and procedures of temple ranking, see *Shūsei* 256–62 and Nara and Nishimura 1979, 198.

The aim of the temples of the sect, and thus the role of the caretaker of the temple, is defined in the constitution as "furnishing the temple buildings, enshrining the principle image and [. . .] propagating the doctrines of the sect, conducting ceremonies, and carrying out important social and cultural work for the public" (*Shūsei*, 238).The temple is also a training hall for preserving and propagating the lineage of the founder Kaisan Musō and the temple system of the sect (ibid.). The function and status of the temple is described in other materials centering on both its religious and social relevance. It must have a "religious atmosphere" (*Josei no bukkyō* 1, i) and be the place for the believers to feel peace of mind (檀信徒の心の安らぎ, ibid.). The temple must strive to get rid of its dark image of being only for elder people, it must follow the time, but without giving in to frivolity; it must be kept refined and simple (*Zau*, 52). The priest, his family, and the *danka* must cooperate in supporting (*goji*) all aspects of temple maintenance (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 106–19). It should also be stressed that an important function of present-day Japanese (Zen) Buddhist temples are their physical frames of being dwelling places for priest families. Most temples house a priest, his wife and children, and some of them also the parents of the priest, the father typically having held the priest office himself.[60]

In materials from Myōshinji it is often emphasized that the temple in itself is nothing but a physical building, and in order to become active, alive, and a "real" temple it needs a priest to run it: "a temple without a priest gives no meaning" (*Zau*, 15). I have talked to many temple priests who would like to see and present their temple as an active religious community center. There are occasional visits to the local temples, just as the *honzan* is visited, mostly on weekends, by adherents who can be seen bowing in front of the Buddha hall. However, (Zen) temples are not used to and seem not really intended to be open for the same kind of daily and casual religious practice one can see in other Buddhist countries. It is quite significant that Buddhist statues in many places are hidden away and not accessible for offerings, and except for those temples with a kindergarten or with an appeal to tourism the subtemples of the main temple in Kyoto in particular are generally closed to the public and not open and active except at specific times

[60] A survey (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 50) showed that only 10% of the temples were occupied by one person, 29% by two to three persons, 33% by four to five persons, 22% by six to seven persons and 3.5% by eight persons or more. In 85% of the temples there was a priest wife (*jitei*), and in 66% a family (*jizoku*) including children (ibid. 52).

and for ritual occasions. In extreme cases temples in the countryside are left to their own destiny as deserted or destroyed, or rented out cheaply to people who just have to inhabit it so descendants can keep their ancestor tablets in the temple. In 1999 there were 938 Myōshinji temples with no permanent priest, 865 of these having other priests assisting (and vie having other noncleric caretakers), while 68 temples were totally left to themselves (*Shōbōrin* 1999: 2, 3: 9). A "committee to take measures against empty temples" has been established (ibid.), and several pages of a guidebook for the priests are devoted to that problem (*Zau*, 114–56).[61]

The Zen temple described in one pamphlet as a "sacred place for the ancestors" (*gosenso no reijō, Shinsan* pamphlet), seems to be a quintessential fact to many Japanese Zen Buddhists. In one recent survey, 82.1 percent stated funerals (*sōshiki*) or religious services (mostly related to ancestors, *hōjō*) to be the prime reason for visiting a temple, and 49.1 percent answered "visiting the graveyard" (*haka*) (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 3). This focus on death is both the main reason for most Japanese to use the temples and the financial basis for keeping temples and Buddhism alive in Japan. It is, however, also a problem to the institution in legitimating its symbolic and doctrinal relevance as a Zen Buddhist tradition. I will return to this in chapter 3.66.

Economy

After the war, priests were forced by the economical situation to either find a new profession—leaving even more thousands of temples deserted—or supplement with other sources of income to provide for a whole family.

Financial security is somehow guaranteed by the tax exemption on religious transactions and services and by the "protection fee" (*goji kaihi*) each temple has to pay to the main temple each year, the amount depending on income and numbers of lay members. This fee is both a financial "investment" by which the sub- and branch temples are bound to their institution if suffering from natural calamity and a symbolic protection, an institutional contract with which to remain part of the

[61] Once the Myōshinji sect, in trying to avoid renting out to people just wanting a cheap place to live, had an advertisement in a news paper to attract more priests to the deserted temples. Quite a few responded, but when they realized that they had to go through religious training in a Zen monastery, all withdraw their expressions of interest.

religious family. Some temples found it more profitable to establish themselves as legally independent after the war. But, despite the possibilities of greater freedom and economical success, the administrative and practical problems of breaking away as well as the security in remaining in the family and keeping the "brand name" (as Myōshinji is) to many have been more weighty arguments.

The economy of the temples depend very much on the context and "type" of temple (see 33–39) and the efforts made by the priest living in the temple. City temples have a much higher income than those in the countryside, and certain regions are more "profitable" than others.[62] The more prestigious, popular, or historically interesting places and temples—e.g., the Ryōanji (Myōshinji) Zen garden and the temples Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji (Shōkokuji)—attract enormous amounts of visitors, each paying 400 to 500 Yen, and tourism constitutes a substantial source of income to the sect and the individual temples. Such places also, especially in postwar times, have a higher possibility of making additional income by sale of talismans and souvenirs. At certain ceremonial periods, different kinds of religious goods and services also make up a substantial part of the temples' finances. During *obon* in 2004, thousands of lamps and paper memorial tablets (*tōba*) each costing 500 to 1,000 Yen were sold, and services for departed souls were offered for 10,000 Yen at the Myōshinji *honzan* where I saw thousands of visitors and countless numbers of busses during the whole week. City temples also have quite a significant income from rental fees on land,[63] parking lots, and other commercial enterprises such as restaurants, teahouses, or kindergartens connected to the temples. Other means of additional income for the priests, whose salary is determined together with representatives of the lay members of the temple, is to take an additional job, either as a priest assisting in other temples with no permanent priest or in a purely "secular" position. The public service is a typical

[62] I have no statistics from Myōshinji, but I am convinced that figures from the Sōtō sect are not essentially different. The income of the temples of the larger cities is twice as high as those from the smaller cities, and almost three times as high as those from the countryside (SSSMC 1995, 188). Temples in Hokkaidō have much higher income than anywhere else (177), probably due to the fact that each temple has more members than in other regions (152); in other words, in Hokkaidō there are not so many (Sōtō) Zen temples.

[63] I spoke to a priest in one of the subtemples of Daitokuji who figured that 90% of his income to the temple came from renting land to a school.

option, and according to a survey 27.5% held a position as an official in this field (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 70). While 70% think the most serious problem with holding an additional position is lack of time (*Hakusho*, 7–8), 41.6% of priests with such positions claim to hold them because of economical reasons. Not only do financial circumstances force the priests to take additional jobs, but 40.2% also value the additional job as religious education (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 70–71).

The most important source of income is still the households affiliated with the temple (*danka*). Though they do not pay any regular fees, they do supply the temple and the priest through donations and payments for religious services. The numbers of *danka* are thus very important, and again the larger and high-ranking temples are typically the ones with most individual users. In a Myōshinji survey from 2002, 48.5% of the temples had zero to 100, 24.7% had 101 to 200, and only 13.7% had more than 201 *danka* (*Jūshoku no chōsa* 60).[64] While 53% of the priests in an earlier survey claimed the ideal to be between 200 and 400 (*Hakusho*, 14), the average was only 64 *danka*, compared to the more prestigious and geographically less-extended temples at Mt. Kōya having 413 *danka* (ibid. 16). Within the last five years, 52% had experienced an average increase of twelve *danka*, while 30% had seen an average decrease of seven to eight *danka*, the former primarily being city temples and the latter being temples in smaller towns and the countryside (*Jūshoku no chōsa* 23 and 59).[65]

Dying in Japan is expensive, and religious services especially related to mortuary and memorial rituals make up the majority of income for the priests and temples. Though there have been no surveys from the Myōshinji institution, I have no reason to doubt statistics to be different from an official survey from the Sōtō sect, where 90% of the temples depend on the income generated from mortuary rites (Rowe 2004, 368). Prices depend on individual temples, though there is a tendency to follow standards of the same area, and/or temple rank. Since Zen monks have trained in monasteries, their expertise and more complicated

[64] In a survey from 1985 the numbers for the same categories were 54%, 25%, and 11% (*Hakusho* 14).

[65] Within the last ten years 31.6% had experienced an increase (and 32.3% a decrease) of numbers of *danka* (*Jūshoku no chōsa* 60), 57% answering affirmative to the possible explanation of this to be a general increase in the population. Temples might, however, report lower figures, since tithes are exacted from *danka* numbers.

rituals also demand higher prices ("donations") than, for instance, Pure Land priests. This, however, is also the reason why some find it too expensive to stay within the sect with which one might not have other relations—"shopping" for cheaper temples is not unheard of, though I have not been acquainted with anyone bargaining to reduce the prices, which *are* often quite high (see 270, n. 234). Voluntary contributions to the temple are also means of income and maintenance if, for instance, the temple needs restoration or a new building. Smaller amounts are also transferred, often as parts of religious ceremonies, and lists of donations from adherents of the sect are shown in the official magazine *Shōbōrin*. Ritual services are, despite their lexical and cultural meanings as "donations" (布施 *fuse*, Skt. *dana*) often—but not always—identical to a set price, contrary to the present (*kifu*). One reason for calling price services for donations is really a matter of (legitimate) financial speculation, since all payments of religious services are tax-exempt. This includes payments for memorials, funerals, and even admission to entering famous temples, which is why signboards outside famous sites do not charge a certain price but instead request a donation. In a survey from 2002, 15.8% of the asked Myōshinji priests claimed to have a yearly income through the temple below one million Yen, 21.1% between one and three million Yen, 25.5% between three and seven million Yen, 20.2% between seven and fifteen million Yen, and 15.5% above fifteen million Yen (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 75).

Social, laicized, and international Zen

"Zen for the masses" has its corresponding slogan in "reforming the clergy" (僧風の刷新 *sōfū no sasshin*) in activating the clergy toward modernity and the populace. This was already signaled at the celebration of the founder Kanzan's 600th death anniversary in 1959, during which all monastic training halls in the country made a special meditation retreat of gratitude (*hō-on sesshin*), a special alms-begging of gratitude (*hō-on takuhatsu*) was performed in all of Kyōto (Kimura 1984, 223), and the conference hall and hotel Myōshinji Hanazono Kaikan were built, all contributing to manifesting the name of the sect.

Intra- and intersectarian relations have been means of identifying and promoting Buddhism as both an expression of Japanese culture and of international significance. Such relations and assemblies are often very formal, and the politics of (mere) ritual celebrations of being parts of

them are often as important as the actual content of their formation.[66] Myōshinji has close relations to other Zen sects. Many of its priests have trained in the same training halls, and the larger ceremonies representatives from the individual sects often participate. It is part of the All Japan Buddhist Organization (Zen Nippon Bukkyōkai), which is the Japanese regional center of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB), and of Joint Council for Rinzai and Ōbaku Zen, Rinnōgōgisho, which also in 2001 established a Network Management Council to create more Internet-based information on and communication within the Rinzai and Ōbaku traditions and sects (see http://zen.rinnou.net/). It has been active in interreligious dialogue, and some of its monks and priests have been part of exchange programs with European Catholic monks (see *Kōryū hōkoku*). The Myōshinji sect also has opened more temples and centers abroad, especially in the United States, where Zen Buddhism in general—though not for the ethnic Japanese (Tagami 1986)—has had an enormous postwar influence as both a religion and as a cultural, spiritual, or literary trend. The aim of international mission is stated in the constitution to be spreading the doctrines throughout the world, contributing to peace and cultivation of mankind (*Shūsei*, 251). Such mission also rebounds to the image of Zen within Japan. Since the World War II, several Myōshinji temples have opened their doors to interested Westerners, and in acknowledging the need to create a place specifically minded for foreigners interested in tasting the Zen life, the International Zen Center in 1997 moved from a branch temple of the Kenninji lineage in Hiroshima prefecture to a Myōshinji temple close to the more accessible Kyōto.

Scholars have also contributed to giving Rinzai Zen an international image. Yanagida Seizan has been the figurehead of what could be called a whole new school of Zen students. On his initiative, in 1986 the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism (IRIZ, in Japanese: Kokusai Zengaku Kenkyūsho) was opened within the Hanazono University by the university president Morinaga Soko, providing possibilities for researchers and students of all matters related to Zen. Yanagida Seizan donated his private research collection to the library

[66] See Fitzgerald's fictitious but realistic story of the foreign Buddhist monk being invited to Japan in the name of exchange and international relations (2000, 199–202).

and became the institute leader, followed by the former president of Hanazono University, Nishimura Eshin, who himself has been engaged in interreligious Buddhist-Christian dialogue.[67] Another institute within Hanazono often used by foreign researchers is the Research Institute for Zen Culture (Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho), established in 1964 as a research center for all Rinzai lineages and sects, and with Yamada Mumon serving as its director until his death in 1988. The aim of the center is to "research the overall fields of Zen thought, history, culture and practice, study the essence [*honshitsu*] of Zen and Zen culture and its contemporary significance, publish the results and contribute to world spiritual culture [*sekai no seishin bunka*]" (www.zenbunka.or.jp). The journal *Zen Bunka* ("Zen Culture") is published four times a year; the first issue appeared in 1955 with a foreword by D. T. Suzuki.

Education is another field in which postwar Zen has had to respond. Myōshinji has its own department of education (Kyōgakubu) at the headquarters, and the sect runs both the Hanazono high school (*kōkō*) and university, the constitution stating as the primary object to give the students a "Zennish" education and religious cultivation (*Shūsei*, 344, see 137). In 1949 the university was approved by the new educational system as a four-year regular college; in 1966 it opened to the general public, and in 1977 it was moved to its present buildings. As in most universities in Japan (because of a general decrease in fertility rate) Hanazono has problems in attracting students, Buddhism and religion not being the most obvious choices of study for young Japanese. A doctorate course (*daigakuin*) has recently been established in order to attract scholarly interested and gifted students, and to manifest the image of being a serious academic institution. Also in the postwar period, several well-known personalities from the modern Zen world have lectured or had positions here, including Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, Shibayama Zenkei, Ōgata Sōhaku, Ichikawa Hakugen, Akizuki Ryōmin, Hirata Seikō, Tokiwa Gishin, Kobayashi Ensho, and Kawamura Eiko; and persons such as Yamada Mumon (1949–78), Ōmori Sōgen (1978–82, founder of the only Western main temple of the Rinzai sect in the West, Chozenji), and Nishimura Eshin (2000–2005) have been presidents (*gakuchō*) here.

What in recent years has been termed "socially engaged Buddhism" to a certain extent also includes modern Japanese Zen Buddhism.

[67] In 2006 the president of the institute was Okimoto Katsumi.

Already Meiji time encounters with Christianity influenced Buddhists to take more seriously the question of charity and social commitment (Thelle 1987, Davis 1992, 178–79). In postwar times, themes with which Myōshinji has had to respond include the aforementioned war guilt, the emperor system, human rights, discrimination, counselling, medical and nursery treatment (brain death, terminal care, hospice), welfare, international issues (refugees, peace, environment, energy), culture, and judicial aspects of religion, all of which are subjects studied, discussed, and dealt with in the department of social matters (Shakaibu) at the headquarters and in publications from the Kyōka Sentā.[68] Following the Sōtō Zen sect, the Myōshinji institution has felt it necessary to take seriously and respond to especially issues of discrimination against the *burakumin* (outcaste communities). Discriminatory posthumous names (*sabetsu kaimyō*) and gravestones have been officially prohibited, texts of the kind which have hitherto been considered important religious teachings of the Zen tradition have been reformulated, and offices for human rights and discrimination are represented by their own physical locations at both the Hanazono University and the Myōshinji headquarters.[69] Such initiatives both function as defensive preventions against attacks and as means of constructively showing the sect to be socially relevant, to be a religious institution with importance for all. If one of the important keywords and slogans for Meiji Zen modernity was "Zen for the masses," then postwar Zen can be said to be the period in which this process of laicization and popularization (大衆化 *taishūka*) has been both a natural outcome of historical circumstances and also consciously enacted in a goal-directed way from the institution, to whom the nature of, and the relationship to, the adherents are of utmost importance in its very raison d'être. In a handbook for priests, the relationships within the organization (*dantai*, itself a living representation of the tradition and the overall institution, *soshiki*) is described to be like the relationship between hospital and client, between a school and its pupils (*Zau*, 14). Humanizing the institution is thus also a semiotic operation naturalizing and legitimating the institution.

---

[68] These themes are discussed in *Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 6–279, ibid. 4, 4–168, and ibid. 5, 3–66. Human rights have even been devoted a whole independent chapter in the constitution (*Shūsei*, 385–90).

[69] Discrimination is dealt with in *Hishin, Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 10–72, ibid. 4, 10–27, ibid. 5, 25–42, ibid. 6, 39–51, and ibid. 7, the latter entirely dedicated to matters on discriminatory posthumous names. See also Bodiford 1996 and Williams 2005, 26–32 on general problems and the responses from the Sōtō sect.

In 1946, to help cultivate the faith of the believers (*Hanazono Q & A*, 108)—Nishimura describes such "belief campaigns" (1983, 55) to be typical postwar reactions—different local organizations (*kyōdan*) were gathered to restore the Hanazonokai, which it was called until 1949, when its name was changed to Myōshinji Hanazonokai. In 1951 the administrative office (Myōshinji Hanazonokai Honbu) became part of the headquarters (Shūmu Honjō), and the independent regional groups were united in one big umbrella organization containing twenty-seven parishes with relations to each local temple. With this, one of the books for priests says, the destiny of the sect was settled (*Zau*, 64). Also, the Musōkyōkai (1950), the Okagesama movement (1973), and the Hyakumannin Shakyō movement (1985) were created as lay-related subdivisions of the Hanazonokai. In 1952 the *ango-e* institution was established, through which temple sons can become priests without spending long time in the monastic life, and in 1961 the concept for priest wife (*jizoku*) was finally officially recognized, later to give way to the reorganization of the new Priest Wives' Organization (*Jitei Fujinkai*). In 1971 a semimonastic dormitory (*zenjuku*) for the students at Hanazono University was established, and the same year the Taishū Zendō (Zen Hall for the Common Populace) opened within the *honzan*. This was built to meet the requests of the general society being engaged in meditation as spiritual practice on the Buddha way (*Shūsei*, 370). It was opened in 1962 and later reopened as a part of the Kyōka Sentā, when it opened in 1979 (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 196). The Kyōka Sentā ("Religious Education Center"), is an organ under the head office of religious education (Kyōka Honbu), with the overall aim to do educational and missionary work for the general populace as well as for the clergy.

Some of the more engaged Hanazonokai members may also participate in transsectarian organizations such as FAS, Sanbō Kyōdan, or some of the many local groups and assemblies under the common Zaike Bukkyōkai (Lay Buddhist Organization), or they may read nonsectarian Buddhist newspapers, journals, and magazines such as *Chūgai Nippō, Daijōzen, Bukkyō* etc. An abundance of literature on Buddhism addressed to the general populace in postwar Japan has generated yet another "Zen boom" (*Bukkyō kanrenzu*, 476), and the invention of new media[70] has been a challenge for the Buddhist institutions to take up

[70] Already in 1932, a program on Hakuin was broadcast on the radio (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 36), and in 1936 a record was made (ibid. 42). Homepages are increasingly being

in promoting their business. However, the modern Myōshinji as an institution also has many problems to face. The number of priests is decreasing, and deserted temples are seen in many places throughout the countryside. The number of lay members also seems to be decreasing as some of them turn to new religions, this being both a frustration for the priests of the traditional religions[71] and yet a comforting sign that secularization is not an irreversible development, that re-sacralization is possible. Statistics showing the Japanese only to have little trust in religious institutions (Kisala 1999, 65) is a challenge also to Myōshinji in keeping its members and in polishing its image.

1.4 Summary

This chapter served as a general outline of the history and structure of the Myōshinji sect. The legendary beginnings with Śākyamuni Buddha and the Chan/Zen patriarchs were described as expressions and means of constituting the institutional network. In these, transmission, tradition, and the sacred kinship have a legitimating role in defining the sect as well as being correlative models of and for both temple relations and agent genealogies. The establishment of the temple Myōshinji by the cloistered emperor Hanazono and the Zen master Kanzan Egen was the beginning of a turbulent history spanning from military government control and cooperation, war and destruction, to the rise of the largest independent Rinzai Zen sect in Japan. Monks, masters, priests, and lay adherents as well as the temple complex, subtemples, and branch-temples all over the country in the Tokugawa period were locked in a rigid feudal system. But the strict regulations of the "main-branch system" and the "household system" also meant increased power of the institution and its priests in being part of the de facto state religion. This was severely criticized in the Meiji restoration, a period introducing modernity, internationalization, nationalism, anti-feudal, and anti-Buddhist campaigns. Different responses from the Buddhist world managed to become legitimate elements of the new times, embodying Buddhist modernity, purifying and inventing traditions, and finally

used as means of communication from the individual temples, and in 2002 Myōshinji had its own site constructed: www.myoshin.com.

[71] Jan van Bragt refers to a seminar at Hanazono University where Zen priests asked themselves, which is why young people instead of going to Aum Shinrikyō did not come to the Zen halls for salvation (2000, 122).

becoming martyrs. Also Myōshinji had to adjust, and later contributed to nationalist discourses and war propaganda, only to realize a postwar deprivation of power, influence, and legitimacy. Post-Meiji, postwar and contemporary Zen Buddhism has had to redefine its roles and positions both according to the judicial framework regulating the scope of religious organizations and to the general trends of (post-) modernity. The main temple complex in Kyoto is the center of the Myōshinji sect and a symbolic focus constructed around the "seven buildings" and surrounded by forty-six local temples, making it an important site and being the "root temple" of the institution. As such it is also the leading mother temple of the 3,500 local temples around the country, being of different kind and rank. Myōshinji has become more international and oriented toward the laity, with educational and research institutions and training halls for lay meditation. Different kinds of lay movements and assemblies have been established, and the sect has truly become a modern bureaucratic institution. But a certain degree of democratization and power shifts challenge deeper functional and structural aspects of the institution as well. How should it continue to be a *shukke* religion when most of its priests are married? How can it in an increasingly individualistic modern society justify itself as a traditional religion? How should it balance between the image of being a funeral religion and a progressive organization caring for social rights, spiritual cultivation, and institutional legitimacy? These questions will be further addressed in the next chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

ZEN BUDDHISTS

Enlightened ones absorbed in deep meditation. Strict, fierce, and grotesquely wild masters in strange religious dialogues. Family fathers in priest robes next to their wives and children or with their colleagues on the golf lane. Monks on periodical alms-begging in front of *danka* members, humbly bowing. Lay members chanting in the *honzan*, priest wives serving tea and culture to the local community, nuns living an isolated and quiet existence, Mercedes priests enjoying prestige and the material world. Ideals, clichés, and realities all make up the living religious world in which the different agents and personalities make Zen Buddhism come alive.

2.1 Men With or Without Rank: *Shukke*, *Zaike*, and a Discussion of Terminology

Categorizing and generalizing are legitimate and necessary operations within all academic disciplines. Making typologies of persons and kinds of Zen Buddhists is a way to comprehend the diversity and complexity of religious agency. This, of course, does not necessitate presumptions of stable and essential individuals or categories. Also, modern and postmodern Japan has been characterized by its rapid process of individualization, especially in terms of the young generations being applauded or criticized for their disrespect for "traditional culture." On the other hand, the enlightenment ideal of the uniquely autonomous individual person has been severely questioned from both Buddhist notions (no-self, nonsubstantiality, and embodiment in interrelated networks), Confucian ideals ("the nail that sticks out is beaten down"), postmodern and social constructivist relativization of the autonomous individual.[1]

[1] See Faure 1993, 243–68 and Carrithers, Collins, and Lukes 1985 on the category of person. As Corless states (1985, 125), the Buddhist reply to Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* naturally is "Think again!"

Categories also overlap with other fields and classificatory systems. A *danshinto* is not just a believer, but also a *sarariman*, a housewife, or a *pachinko* lover. Therefore, the individual placement within the structural hierarchies of one institution (e.g., the religious) may be different from another (e.g., the family, or company), just as schemes and *habita* may be different from other cultural domains. The manager of a large company might meet the humble Zen priest on a weekly basis to play golf. In another context he might employ the same priest to do courses in *zazen* for the company, even accepting a severe scolding for not sitting correctly during *zazen*. Power relations are often stable, but not *a priori* static.

Neither are concepts and categories. Today's terminology of the religious individuals and their institutional statuses are different from the medieval *gozan* system, in which neither the terms *jūshoku, kanchō, rōshi, danka* or *shinto* were used, and in which there was more basically a division between those who had taken the 250 Mahayana precepts, and those who had not (Collcutt 1981, 228). The general division between lay and clergy, identical to the division between those living in the household (*zaike*) and those who have left home (*shukke*), has changed dramatically, and a clear-cut division is hard to keep. When an institutional organ was established to write a small guidebook for general education (*ippan kyōka*), a "chapter on peace of mind for the lay members" (*zaike anjinshō*) was written, the title soon being changed to "chapter on peace of mind for our sect" (*Shūmon anjinshō*). The people behind the project simply found the concept of *zaike* ("lay") too narrow, and the distinction between *shukke* and *zaike* too superficial (ibid. 3). An evaluation of the thoughts and practices of present-day priests in one of the "problem points" (*mondai ten*) expresses this institutional dilemma: "Originally we were an organization of *shukke*, but how shall we explain to our successors the fact, that many do not live a life different from lay people [*zaizoku*]?" (*Hakusho*, 19).

Blurring categories need not, however, be solely problematic. They are also the fields in which the agents and the institution have possibilities of moving and crossing expected boundaries. The Chan/Zen traditions in several ways have specialized in such crossing, or overlapping, of "semantic fields" (Faure 1991, 53). Ideal figures have been used to question categories of agency and institutional affiliation, though philosophical and rhetorical positions do not (necessarily) correspond or even relate to institutional or historical realities. Linji's famous dictum about the true man of Zen having no rank is one such instance of rhetori-

cally challenging preconceived religious and institutional boundaries. Rather than judging whether his statement is correctly describing (or prescribing) institutional or rhetorical truths, it can be seen as an idea, a root paradigm with no answer, stretching and challenging the space within the semantic field of agency and truth. Contemporary Zen also moves within this semantic field in which both men with and without rank are active agents.

2.2 The Clergy

Noritake Kotoku's grandparents were Korean. Though he lived all his life in Japan, his ethnic roots brought him to prison, having been accused of being a North Korean spy. While suffering in the miserable prison life, he saw a fly. "Flying around, it enjoys space and freedom, it has no desire," he thought to himself, realizing that his life was going to take another direction. He started practicing *zazen*. Years later he graduated from Hanazono University, lived three years as a monk in a Myōshinji training hall, became a Zen priest, worked eight years at the Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho, was a cofounder of the International Zen Center of Japan, and now runs his own Hōsenji Zen Center for interested Japanese and foreign lay people.[2]

The fly was one triggering object for his decision on following the monastic and clerical life. Another was being inspired by Yamada Mumon, a Zen master, abbot, and teacher at Hanazono University (see 61). Many of the priests I have spoken to say they were inspired as students by Yamada Mumon's personality. Meeting such inspiring persons, or merely reading books by or about them, is a classic triggering experience as well for those young temple sons who at some point in their lives question the path that has been chosen for them.

The path can be either a ritual process toward a new status and a new life, or a never-ending spiritual path for the serious practitioner. The Zen clergy, including monks, nuns, priest wives, and sons, is a very important part of the religious world that constitutes and upholds living Zen Buddhism in Japan.

[2] I have talked to Noritake several times; a more formal interview was conducted in his temple in 1997. See also www.zazen.or.jp.

Shukke: *"Leaving home" and returning as a ritual process*

In the small novel *Shukke*, the concept of "leaving home" is convincingly described by Miura Kiyohiro (1988) from a contemporary parent's point of view. From being a beloved part of a family tied together with genetic and emotional bonds, the son is leaving home in order to be part of another family, the religious kinship of the monastery. *Shukke* (出家) thus denotes a symbolic *movement*, a wandering between two worlds, between two family domains, between two personal statuses and identities. Leaving is a "liminal" process, a sphere of being betwixt and between two worlds (Turner 1989, 95) in which the novice-to-be is neither a person of the social world nor yet of the monastic world. Earlier it was common for the novice aspirants to travel on foot (行脚 *angya*) from home to the monastery, making the *shukke* movement a pilgrimage. Leaving is also a ritual *event* in the ritual process of leaving one domain, the life of the householder, *zaike*, in favor of another, its conceptual other-part, the monastery taking over the space of being the new "home." Already in the ordination ceremony at an early age, the family symbolically says farewell to their son, transferring him to the new spiritual "father," Buddha. Leaving home to go to the monastery, however, also marks a "real" separation and beginning of an irreversible process of initiation into the role and life of monkhood and later clergy.

Leaving home, or "renouncing" the social and biological home to live a life in the sangha is an important religious practice of the Buddhist world.[3] early Indian Buddhism—and as expressed in the legend of Śākyamuni Buddha—renouncement was influenced by the wandering religious mendicants,[4] but with the often emphasized important difference that renouncement in most cases was not an absolute rejection of this world, neither socially nor conceptually, but institutionalized as a religious field serving as mediator and middle way for individual renouncers as well as for society.[5] Leaving the social world to become a

[3] This, of course, does not count for those modern Buddhist lay movements in which there is a point in *not* leaving home to be a true Buddhist.

[4] Sk. *śramana*, P. *samana* in Japanese *shamon*, not to be confused with the title of the novice monk *shami* (Sk. *śrāmanera*, P. *sāmanera*), though they are related concepts. The *samana* probably was later to influence the Indian *varnashramadharma* system and the concept of the last *ashram*, the renouncing *sannyasin*. Harvey actually suggests that "Buddhism was a Samana movement" (1990, 13).

[5] Leaving home is a social event, but also ideally in Buddhist orthodoxy an event to "leave the cosmos" (Faure 1998, 34), transcending illusions of perceived ontologi-

monk perhaps more often than being a matter of individual salvation is motivated by social concerns and "this-worldly" benefits.[6] This does not, I believe, necessitate a total negation of including *parts* of Buddhist philosophy and institutional life under the old Weberian category of being a religion of "world negation." A certain amount of symbolic emphasis is placed on world negation and renunciation in most forms of Buddhism, and even in modern Japanese Zen Buddhism it does function as an ideal type (in a Weberian sense) of being religious. *Shukke* is distinguished from *zaike, hizoku* (非俗 not-lay) is distinguished from *hisō* (非僧 nonclergy), as the other world (出世間 *shusseken*) is distinguished from this world (世間 *seken*).

Shukke also covers the way of life a monk is living in one of the special training halls for monks (see chapter 3.4). The term for a Zen Buddhist monk in training is *unsui* (雲水). The *kanji* in *unsui* (cloud 雲 and water 水), suggested by Nishimura is meant to express that "monks gather around a great Zen master as water or clouds gather in certain places," and "monks live their lives so smoothly that they can be compared to a moving cloud or to running water" (Satō 1973, 1). *Unsui* live in a *sōrin*, a "grass thicket" in which each has to deepen his roots and grow, individually and in the religious community. They are also termed *shugyōsō* (修行僧), monks practicing religious austerities (*Josei no bukkyō* 3, 50).

The majority of those entering the *sōdō* continue the religious genealogy in which they were brought up. A survey from 2002 showed that 71.3% come from temple families (寺院出身 *jiin shusshin*) and 28% from lay families (在家出身*zaike shusshin, Jūshoku no chōsa*, 67).[7] From my own surveys the pattern is even more pronounced: 94.4% of those participating in the *ōsesshin* (meditation retreat) and 60% of the students of the Religious Studies classes from temple families expect to enter monastic life after graduation, compared to only 17.9% and 6%

---

cal realities of the desire realm. Though the ideal of not rejecting the world is most common, Buddhist history also has, however, many examples of Buddhists living isolated in forests, mountains, caves, etc. In Japan some individual *yamabushi* monks, for instance, took the idea of renouncement at face value, mummifying themselves to death, and to nirvana. On Chan and Zen mummification and "flesh-bodies," see Faure 1991, 148–78.

[6] Better karma or rebirth for oneself and one's family and relatives in some Buddhist countries are still motives for having the son(s) join the Buddhist sangha. After the war, many Japanese young orphan boys were sent to the temple for financial reasons.

[7] In an earlier survey from 1985, the numbers were respectively 68% and 32% (*Hakusho*, 6).

of those from lay families.[8] Quite a few (83% and 47%) from temple families claimed to study Buddhism at Hanazono University in order to inherit a temple, while none of those from lay families had considered this career option.

In modern Japanese Zen Buddhism monastic life is only a transitional and temporary affair. Though highly praised in all literature as the most perfect expression of true Buddhism—Zen being a "*shukke* religion" (Nishimura 1983, 51)—monastic life only functions as an important phase in the ritual process, which itself ideally is an endless process of religious education. There is a certain prestige and respect in staying many years in the *sōdō*, but most are only *shukke* monks for a few years—and in modern times it is even possible to stay only six months or even less. A Myōshinji survey showed that half of the responding priests had spent less than two years, and 10 percent not even one year in the *sōdō* (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 65). "Such short periods can never justify a true monastic experience," a priest, who himself had stayed four and a half year in the *sōdō*, told me, commenting on the reduced time and quality of present-day conditions in Zen monasteries. In practice the length of the stay is decided by both the monk and his sponsor and/or father, who both have an interest in securing a proper monastic education for the young priest-to-be. Contrary to most Theravada Buddhist monks in Southeast Asia,[9] monastic life in modern Japanese Zen Buddhism is primarily a necessary step in the institutional process of becoming a priest, *jūshoku*.

Shukke *as returning* sōryo

Within the Myōshinji institution there are approximately 7,000 *sōryo* (僧侶), or in its abbreviated form *sō* 僧 *Sōryo* is often interchangeable with *shukke* and was originally a synonym of *sōgya* (僧伽), the original translation of the Buddhist *sangha*. *Sōryo* can be translated "monk," "priest," or "clergy" in a very general sense, including the movement

[8] It should be noted, however, that many of those students participating in the *ōsesshin* (and the survey) confirming their positive intentions already have one leg in the monastery as they live in the "semi-monastery" (*juku*) during their time of study. On the other hand, of those giving vague or negative responses, some will probably have to reconsider their ideas for their future when final graduations and expectations and pressures from family and parish come closer.

[9] Though temporary stays in monasteries also in Southern Buddhism are common as ways of religiously and socially maturing young people, compared to Japan the number of monks staying permanently in monastic life is far superior.

of the *shukke*, the transitional status of the monastic *unsui*, and the institutional "permanent" occupation of the priest. It also has semantic affinity to other concepts and titles of honor with the same connotations: *shūkyōsha* (宗教者 "religious specialist"), *bukkyōsha* (仏教者, "Buddhist priest"), *oshō* (和尚 "virtuous monk"), or to underline the institutional affiliation, *zensō* (禅僧, "Zen monk/priest"). A *sōryo* is, however, most often understood to be a member of the educated clergy, a priest as opposed to the monk. He is thus described as "a person who has entered the Buddhist priesthood (仏門 *butsumon*), wears a Buddhist robe (*kesa*), and, while going through training himself, works for transmitting and spreading the Buddha's teachings" (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu*, 34).

Though the status and meaning of the monastery has changed significantly in modern times, the system of leaving home in order to come back is not only a result of historical change; both traditional Mahayana Buddhist sources as well as contemporary voices insist that the proper *shukke* must return to social life. The return, however, is ideally not a return to "basics," but a return to life outside the monastery with a different mind, status, and social and institutional capacity. Before entering the *sōdō*, most monks today have been to school and even graduated from a university, typically a Buddhist one like the Rinzai Zen Buddhist university Hanazono Daigaku (owned and supported by Myōshinji), and—as opposed to most other Asian Buddhist monks—they are generally very well educated.[10] In the *sōdō* the monks learn the more practical side of the life of a monk and priest. They are being spiritually, ritually, and institutionally educated, and when "returning to life," the newly educated *sōryo* have ideally incorporated these aspects into their mind and body, ready to become priests capable of transferring *shukke* power into the *zaike* life. Often a young *sōryo* will return to his father's temple, functioning as assistant priest under his father's guidance until his retirement. The returning *sōryo* has thus come full circle in his educational, ritual process.

This typical Chan/Zen philosophical (and institutional) point is illustrated by the ten ox-herding pictures, originally painted by the Chinese Kaku-an (twelfth century) and later used as metaphorical expressions of the Chan/Zen Buddhist process toward enlightenment, and back

[10] 58.7% of the Myōshinji priests have graduated from university (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 64), a number presumably increasing in the years to come; 23.5% had gone to school with Buddhist affiliation, and 30.9% were in a school with religious relations (*shūmon kankei*, ibid. 65).

to the social world.[11] Having caught the ox (the self) and transcended himself (expressed by an empty circle), the tenth painting shows the fat and laughing Buddha (Ch. Budai, J. Hotei) returning to the marketplace as a true ideal expression of a Mahayana Bodhisattva. Whether the individual process is seen to be a reversal (the individual experiences his original Buddha nature) or a progress (Buddha nature or enlightenment is achieved as something *different*), the pictures illustrate that "the goal of Zen is not simply an inner state of tranquility but the social reconstruction of the self" (Odin 1996, 453). I will treat the role and expectations of the Zen priest later and just conclude this paragraph by suggesting that pragmatic reasons for returning to the social world are equally important. Eighty-eight percent of the priests from the Myōshinji sect are married (*Hakusho*, 19). Though 72% of the priests (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 98) and 69% of their wives (ibid. 223) think tonsure important for *sōryo*, only 50% in 1985 kept polished tonsure—46% of those not shaving their heads because of their having a part-time job on the side (*Hakusho*, 12).

Dharma rank and hierarchy; status and stratified clerical systems

Though the founder of the Rinzai lineage Linji is known for his above-mentioned paradigmatic expression of the true man having no rank, rank and hierarchy is very much part of living Japanese Buddhism. Some priests, especially after having settled as family fathers and temple priests, or if engaged in another profession considered perhaps more important than the vocation of being a priest, do not care or even know their rank in the stratified hierarchy. But in order to become a priest, and especially if one is aspiring to become the abbot of the sect, certain corresponding qualities and qualifications are necessary.

Two kinds of related ranking systems are used to measure the status of the individual *sōryo*. The *hōkai* (法階, "dharma rank") system has a

[11] As these paintings and the theme of the paintings have been used as almost archetypal representations of Chan/Zen ideals they have naturally been reproduced by many artists. In Shōkokuji in Kyōto the paintings are stored and occasionally exhibited. The paintings are also the subject of religious and/or scholarly discourse. Most known in the West is D. T. Suzuki's use of them in explaining the Zen mystical process; his translation is even included in the book *How to Practice Zazen* from the Research Institute for Zen Culture, a center within the Myōshinji sect. Though often used in popular literature, the significance of the paintings and their ideological value should not, however, be underestimated. They are used also as the subject of dharma talks within monastic life; e.g., Yamada 2004.

long tradition, beginning in Chinese Chan Buddhism[12] and used and conferred by the *bakufu* in the Edo period. The *tōkyū* (等級 "rank," or "class") system was a later Meiji period means of measuring and controlling Buddhist priests across their sectarian affiliation.

The *hōkai* ranks express different layers in the Buddhist clerical career hierarchy, starting with the *shami* rank, progressing in thirteen further steps and titles. The *tokyū*-class system is simply a list of classes counted in "teacher" (*kyōshi*) grades, beginning with teacher assistant (教師補 *kyōshiho*), to which the three lowest *hōkai* ranks are rated, progressing from seventh class to first class teacher, corresponding to each of the *hōkai* ranks, ending in the highest position, the "great teacher" (大教師 *dai kyōshi*), to which the three highest *hōkai* ranks correspond. Upward mobility—there is in practice no way to move down in the ranking system—is measured through the teacher grading system.

There are two ways of progressing until the second grade, either through passing exams or, as is the norm in practice, through authorization without examination (*mushiken kentei*). The latter has different criteria, depending on time (age and years since ordination *hōrō*), education (school, university, university subject, and grade), and religious practice (*sōdō* or through *ango-e*). For instance, to become a *shami* one has to be at least five years old, and to get the title of *zenjūshoku* one has to be at least forty years old and with a *hōrō* seniority of thirty years. The criteria also cross-relate, so that, for instance, years spent in the training hall can be reduced by the time spent in the university or in the cram school (*juku*). To become a second grade teacher (and thus a *jūjishoku*) one has to 1) have graduated from the Buddhist studies department at Hanazono University and spent two years in the *sōdō*, *or* 2) hold a Ph.D. degree (from any university) and have spent two years in the *sōdō*, *or* 3) have graduated from high school and spent seven years in the *sōdō*, *or* 4) have graduated from junior high school and spent ten years in the *sōdō* etc.[13] Having acquired one's experience in the training hall through the *ango-e* (see below)—which counts much less than having lived in the *sōdō* as a monk—one can only pass beyond the *tōdōshoku* title (fourth grade teacher) by taking further courses (*fukyō kōshūkai*) aiming at becoming *fukyōshi* (布教師), that is, "missionary teacher" (see below). The ranks up

[12] Though similar ranking systems exist in all clerical Buddhism (and Shinto) in Japan, titles and use differ according to the sects.

[13] See appendix in the *Shūsei* for a full chart of the related systems and criteria. See also *Kōko hosshiki bonbaishō*, 45 on the ranking systems.

to teacher of second rank (住持職 *jūjishoku*) is bestowed by the abbot on application, and if circumstances require it—if taking over a high-class temple requiring a high-class priest—it is even possible to jump over some steps, with the necessary costs of rank progression (*Shūsei*, 284). The ranking system also is a guideline for acquiring the title of priest. To become a *jūshoku* requires a *zendō*-title (or seventh grade teacher). Moving further up in the Great Teacher class requires the special qualification of being a Zen master of the training hall (*shike*), and the *tokujūshoku* (特住職) is only given to the abbot (*kanchō*). The highest *hōkai* ranks also require quite a significant amount of money (the celebration itself is a prestigious and expensive affair), and certainly not all priests would consider spending fortunes getting a title. The ranks achieved by most Myōshinji priests (44.9%) is teacher of second rank/*jūjishoku*, followed by teacher of first rank/*zenjūshoku* (18.4%) and teacher of third rank/*junjūshoku* (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 66). Apart from the prestigious title itself, the Great Teacher grade is a criterion for being eligible for the positions of abbot (*kanchō*) and university president (*gakuchō*). Posthumous conferring of rank (追贈 *tsuizō*) is also possible (ibid. 288–89), a relic of the former prestigious posthumous rank of National Teacher (国師 *kokushi*) which former Zen masters acquired from either emperors or *shōgun*—the latter thus themselves earning merit and political power of being the one conferring the title.

In addition to ranks, honorific titles serve as institutional identity markers. *Oshō* (和尚, "virtuous monk") is an honorific term for an educated *sōryo* with a grade of teacher (*kyōshi*) above *zendōshoku* rank, and above *jūjishoku* with the attached *daizenji*, "great master." *Rōshi* (老師) is used as an honorific title for a Zen master with a grade of great teacher (*dai kyōshi*), or simply an "elder teacher," which the characters mean. *Rōshi* in particular has been widely used in English as a concept expressing the "enlightened Zen master." Within the Sōtō sect the *rōshi* title is even less protected as an honorific title.

Ranks express institutional and ritual mastery, and ideally personal and spiritual quality as well. They serve to manifest the tradition by inscribing new members in the hierarchy and lineage as true members of the family, but also to differentiate the individual parts of the system, creating a natural dynamism of performative power relations, to which some ascribe themselves more deeply than others. The ranks are announced in the institutional organ for the priests, the *Shōbōrin*, and are shown at ceremonial occasions upon which rank is displayed by type

of ceremonial hat, rosary, or type and colors of the robes, etc. (*Shūsei* 475), all of which are also determined by the ranking system.[14]

Alternative career mobility: ango-e

Ango-e is another way of joining the institutional path. *Ango* (安居) means "peaceful dwelling." In Sanskrit (*vārsika*) it designates the rainy seasons in which the monks stay in their monasteries, and as a concept related to measuring time it is still used in modern monastic Zen Buddhism. The ritual year is divided into *ango* periods, and the time since leaving monastic life (*hōrō*) is also counted in *ango*.

Ango-e, however, is a meeting (会 *e*) of persons aspiring to achieve the institutionally authorized certificate (*shikaku*) necessary to become a priest by means of part-time religious training and education at local temples (*chihō ango-e*) or at the main temple (*honzan ango-e*) in Kyoto. (I will return to the religious practice of the *ango-e* in chapter 2.2.). Since its establishment in 1952, the *ango-e* has been a system responding to the problems of getting vacant positions occupied, of activating dying parishes, and of making deserted temples come alive. The *ango-e* is primarily directed toward temple sons, who after graduation have taken full-time occupations (typically within the educational system, *Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 267), but who, for some reason, wish to become full- or part-time priests. Not being able to, or having interest in, spending a whole year in a *sōdō*, they can acquire their *jūshoku* titles through five *ango-e* courses of ten days, doing monastic training while living in the Myōshinji *zenjuku*. In 2004 there were twenty attendants, all with *shami* rank, most of whom received their certificates at a *honzan* ceremony. Those failing the tests in proving their skills in monastic practices such as *zazen*, sutra recitation, or ritual accuracy can either re-enter parts of the course or hope for approval in applying for dispensation.

There are different opinions and levels of critique of, and prejudices against, the *ango-e* system. Some regard it as a Buddhist "skill in means" (J. *hōben*, Sk. *upāya*), as an expression of mercy (*onasakeron*), as a way to offer salvation for those who are not able to, or interested in, joining full-time monastic life (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 151), while others are overall

[14] Ikkyū was known to express his dislike of ranks and colors of the robes, which is why he always wore a black one—a style apparently having been kept alive in the subtemple of Daitokuji, in which he lived.

negative toward devaluating the monastic system, finding it too easy and not in accordance with the true monastic life in which they are interested in preserving. In general *ango-e* is not as highly esteemed and respected as "true" monastic Zen, and progression in the career system with *ango-e* qualifications are rated lower than the *sōdō* way (*Shūsei*, 474–76). The institution is thus caught in the dilemma of both having to promote the "original"monastic career system and the "real" *shukke* priest while also having to adjust to the "real" circumstances of society.[15] After all, 19 percent of the priests in the Myōshinji sect had their religious training through *ango-e* system (*Hakusho* 1985, 5).

Clerical offices

There are only few alternative possibilities within the institution for those *sōryo* not becoming priests in local temples.

The *shike* (師家) is the teacher (師) in the monastic household (家). He is the "true" *shukke* who has—ideally, but not necessarily—gone through all the kōan of the particular monastic kōan-system, and who stays permanently in monastic life leading the monastery and guiding the monks, thus also referred to as the "elder teacher in the monk's hall" (*sōdō rōshi*). He has received the certificate of enlightenment (*inka shōmei*) just as he himself can transmit this to his successor. Unless returning to lay life, or taking up a position as priest in a temple, a *shike* within the Myōshinji sect is not allowed to marry but must keep the strict rules of renouncement.[16] As such he has the prestige and generally owns the respect of being a true Zen master, a living symbol of the Zen monastic tradition, the quintessence of Zen virtues ideally incarnating wisdom, spirituality, strict discipline, individuality, and yet gentle social personality. He is, in a certain sense, the religious main figure.

The *shike* office also qualifies him to be eligible as *kanchō* (管長), chief abbot of the sect. The *kanchō* is the formal and institutional leader of the sect (the "political" representative being the administrative representative, the *shūmu sōchō* 宗務総長), and as such he is the highest priest

[15] For other points of critique and counter-critique, see *Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 267–76 and ibid. 4, 145–54.

[16] Within the Tenryūji sect I know of at least three incidences where the *shike* has married. Though considered to be a rule kept under control, general tendencies of "softening" monastic discipline might also turn out to effect this office within the Myōshinji sect.

and still has the status of "semi-government official" (Ikeda 1998, 17). He is in a position to appoint and dismiss the priests and to appoint the titles in the ranking system, and he promulgates and ratifies the rules and regulations of the sect (*Shūsei*, 39). The abbot is the ritual main figure in larger ceremonies in the main temple, and he also represents the institution on his periodic visits to the local temples (*shinke*). The position as abbot is based on election, each elected period lasting four years.[17] In particular Yamada Mumon (1900–1989) was a highly respected abbot attracting general institutional goodwill. He held the office for several successive periods while also being a priest at Shōfukuji and the president at Hanazono University until 1988. He was known for his works of art, and he wrote popular books on Zen Buddhism, several of which were published by and are still sold at Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho. Yamada Mumon was one of the few Japanese Rinzai Zen masters known outside of Japan. He showed his international interests in building a stupa at Bodhgaya, conducting war-dead repentance pilgrimages to Southeast Asia, opening the East West Spiritual Exchange between Catholics and Buddhists, and being the prime mover behind the International Zen Center at Hanazono University. Reverence for his person is shown through portraits of him (at Hōrinji, see 237) and a building at Hanazono named after him (Mumonkan); and his status in one of the *honzan tacchū*, Reiun-in, not only eternalizes his spirit and memory but also has become the object of worship among lay Buddhists visiting the temple for periodic *zazenkai*.

If the *shike* is the monastic leader, the *kanchō* the institutional and ritual leader, the *gakuchō* is the educational leader. The *gakuchō* (学長) is the president of the Myōshinji owned Hanazono University, being of great significance to the sect as well as to the person holding this prestigious office. The president is the supreme authority in producing candidates both to the secular labor market and to the clerical institution. Within the university he is revered and respected and in general has strong symbolic power, expressed both in academic and in ceremonial gatherings. Most teachers in the department of religious studies are themselves (part-time) priests, and "turning academic" as a "scholar monk" (学僧 *gakusō*) is one way of using the capabilities earned

---

[17] Other sects have different types and rules of the abbot office. Earlier, Jōdō Shinshū held it as a hereditary post, while the structure of rotation among the priests within the sect has also been widely used.

in the religious career system. Scholastic-minded monks are part of all Buddhist societies, profiling the institution as a Great Tradition. Some scholar monks are also represented at the headquarters, though not all of the approximately seventy employees are clerical. The position as missionary teacher (布教師 *fukyōshi*) is a separate office within the framework of the headquarters, mainly being held as a side position of the holder of the most common office within all Japanese Buddhist sects, the common priesthood (僧籍 *sōseki* or 僧職 *sōshoku*).

The persecutions of Buddhist priests and destructions of temples during the Meiji era did affect the Zen clergy enormously, though the temple inheritance system has guaranteed some stability and even rise in the number of priests since then. Though methods of counting are not defined, statistics show that there were 4,242 *sōryo* in 1892, 6,145 in 1985 (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 8); and according to the headquarters in Kyoto there are presently (2006) approximately 7,000—3,300 of which are priests. Questionnaires from a 2000 Kyōka Sentā survey were sent to all full-time priests, numbering 2,444 (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 1).

The priest

"Don't hurry, don't rush, take your time, relax, relax," says a Myōshinji poster showing a modern businessman riding an ox while joyfully playing a flute. On the reverse side of this poster, the symbolism of which naturally draws upon the ten ox-herding pictures (see 55), a text explaining the possibilities of actually living a spiritually deep life in a modern and complex world ends the slogan with the words: (Trying to do this) "you will realize something important."[18] Kobayahi, the priest living in the temple where I first saw the poster, had entered Hanazono high school in Kyoto, studied at Komazawa University in Tokyo, and finished his monastic stay at the Myōshinji training hall in Kyoto. As his father was still an active temple priest in Kyūshū, he was not in a position to take over his office and temple. He started searching around Japan. Coming to the Okinawan island Ishigakijima he fell in love with the climate, the peace, and the quiet atmosphere. He settled down as the new priest in one of the more remote Myōshinji temples, Tōrinji. Today he is married, has three children and 700 temple affili-

[18] いそがないで、せかさないで、時間をかけて、ゆっくりゆっくりやってみると大切な何かが見えてくるのです。

ated *danka*. He convinced me that he is living a truly happy life as a Zen priest, *jūshoku*—and that the slogan of the poster could be written by himself.

Jūshoku (住職) means priest, being a *sōryo* with a temple (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 34). He is chosen and appointed by the old *jūshoku* of the temple, and, having registered at the main offices of the sect, the national and the local government, he is legally considered a religious juridical person, the official caretaker of a religious body (*shūkyō hōjin*).

A priest might have employed an assistant priest (副住職 *fuku jūshoku*). The position as an assistant priest is ideally only temporary, a stepping stone to the permanent office as priest.[19] Most often the assistant priest is the son of the priest, and after returning from the monastery he will be a priest-in-training under his father's guidance. They typically both live in the same temple and often with their families, even after the son has taken over the official office and his retiring father has become a "former priest" (先住職 *sen jūshoku*).

When rural temples have no permanent priest and are uninhabited (無住寺院 *mujū jiin*), they can get assistance from a priest from another temple, who is thus also holding an additional position as priest (兼務住職 *kenmu jūshoku*), carrying out an additional office as assisting part-time priest. A *kenmu jūshoku* will typically be in charge of several temples, and often he is a permanent priest in a large, prestigious, and rich temple. Though the position as *kenmu jūshoku* can be a rather profitable business, the majority (76.2%, *Jūshoku chōsa*, 129) earn less than a million Yen per year by this side job. The empty temples might still have adherents, and thus sources of income, but no active community, and investment of time and energy is often moderate. Almost all (97.7%) *kenmu jūshoku* are male (ibid. 118).

As a social, religious, and individual person the priest must live up to the expectations of the institution and the local society. The duties (*ninmu*) of the *jūshoku* are listed in the "essential points" (宗鋼 *shūkō*) in the constitution of the sect (*Shūsei*, 8–9).

> The priest of the sect's temples and churches must serve the Buddha(s) and patriarchs, observe the rules of the sect, work for the propagation of the Buddha dharma [*buppō*], conduct religious services [*hōyō*], devote

[19] The average age of the priests responding to a questionnaire from the Kyōka Sentā was 55 years (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 55).

> himself to missionary education [*fukyō kyōka*], work for the believers [*danshinto*] to take the refuges, keep the dignity of the clergy [*sōryo*], not scorn or look down upon society, always measure and improve his own nature [*shishitsu*], work for the maintenance and prosperity of the sect [*honha*], the main temple [*daihonzan*], the temple(s) [*jiin*] and church(es) [*kyōkai*], and train and educate his children [*gakuto*] and wife [*jizoku*].

A handbook from Myōshinji describes "the mottos of the sect's priests":

> He must take pride in the clergy [*sōryo*] and priest wives [*jizoku*] of the sect
> He must work hard in understanding the doctrines of the sect and investigating the essentials of the Rinzai sect
> He must live in harmony with the believers [*danshinto*] and correct his own life
> He must bring up his descendants
> He must work hard for the propagation of Zen (*Zau*, 167).

Another guide book for Rinzai Zen priests (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 12–17) lists three main missions, or duties (*shimei*), for the priest to realize and manifest: 1) He is a person with a special profession (*senmonteki shokugyōjin*), but although he does receive respect as a somewhat honored person, he is not to think of himself as an isolated individual looking down on the world from above (ibid. 13). 2) The priest should, however, not forget that the Rinzai sect defines itself as being a *shukkeshū*, a religion for and of renouncers. This begins with the ordination and naturally reaches its utmost peak in the monastic period, continuing the rest of one's life as a never-ending process of cultivation (ibid. 14). 3) The last point is to make clear that the priest is the responsible caretaker and representative of the temple, of which he is to take daily care.

The expectations of the priest to pursue the monastic ideal of being a *shukke* is often underlined and promoted as the common denominator of the clergy of the Zen lineages, as opposed to other Buddhist sects in Japan. Though many priests live a life not different from the lay community, they get (and must keep) their dignity as a non-lay (*hizoku*). They are expected to live a life expressing the ideal of living up to the expectations of being "typical of a Zen priest" (*zenbōzurashisa*, *Zau*, 164), spreading the "atmosphere of being a typical Zen monk" (*zensōrashii funiki*) and permanently delving into their own selves as true Zen monks (*zensō*, ibid. 29–30). Thus "a *sōryo* not doing *zazen* or *samu* is itself a self-contradiction" (ibid. 31), lack of time being no excuse since sitting only once a day during morning service is sufficient

(ibid.). The Zen priesthood is different from other worldly affairs as it is a sacred profession (*seishoku, Jūshokugaku kōza*, 13). Especially among priests themselves certain individuals are known to be more "Zen-like" (*zenteki*) than others. I have often heard expressed the attitude, also from lay people, that the "true Zen temple" with a certain "Zen standard" is one inhabited by only a single *shukke* priest with no family. Though the wild trickster figures of the Chan/Zen traditions are mostly to be seen as literary and rhetorical constructions (Faure 1991, 115–31) the image of extraordinary Zen agents is still a living image and an ideal to be promoted in certain contexts. Some of the comments to a survey from the Kyōka Sentā to participants in the Zen hall for lay members (Taishū Zendō) voiced such images. One found the Zen priests to be more strict than priests from other sects (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 228), another thought that there are many strange people among the Zen clergy (ibid.)—one finds them to be "silent and fierce as a devil and with brisk manners, but in times of trouble always extending a helping hand" (ibid.). The front covers of some of the books (which have also been made into posters marketing the books) by a priest in Daisenin in Daitokuji, Ozeki Sōen, also promote the image of an enlightened and wild Zen priest (e.g., 1981).

Priests known for and respected to be more strict and "religious" are looked upon by the lay community as clerical masters of "true rank." And "since anyone claiming direct experiential knowledge of God or the ultimate reality is in effect claiming unmediated authority to speak the truth" (King 1999, 10), the priest naturally himself can feel and express the power and knowledge of being a legitimate searcher and expression of the true way of the patriarchs. If he does not possess "truth," he can acquire it. I have often spoken with lay Buddhists who refer to their priests—or young hesitant priests who refer to their superiors—if asked even simple or personal (nondoctrinal) questions; all seemed to have an idea of "true" answers, truth qualitatively escalating in clerical hierarchy.

But although his personal "*shukke* character" is often idealized as a necessary requirement, it also seems that even without "inner qualifications" a priest serves well and acquires his symbolic power as a ritual specialist. The priest is the practical and daily representative of the temple for which he must deal with anything from cleaning to taking care of financial affairs. He is identified with the temple and is often called "Mr. Temple" (*oterasan*), or "Mr. So-and-So Temple" (*-jisan*). He reads,

understands, and controls the sacred texts to which only academics and the educated clergy have access, and in conducting the correct performances of rituals, his power of being an orthodox mediator to the Other World makes him a living signifier of institutional power.

However, it is again and again underlined that this special profession is not to be an isolated, other-worldly existence and profession, but must be rooted in and encompassed by a this-worldly community and life. A priest must reject the attitude of being an arrogant and superior religious specialist (*shūkyōsha*) feeling superior to the common people (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 207). Even a religious specialist is also a seeker (*kyūdōsha*) on the Buddhist path, and as such on the same level as the lay adherents (ibid.). The *sōdō* life must not be a permanent way of life, but must be applied to a social life (*shakai seikatsu*, ibid. 12).

This dilemma and dynamic paradox of being within and outside the social world has, as mentioned, always been important in Buddhist history. Telling stories from the hard life of the monastic life is a popular aspect of both dharma talks and books. In general, however, only a minority seems actually to be interested in the "spiritual" capacities of the priest or in isolated individuals renouncing the social world and thus not repaying their part of the socioreligious exchange. The ideal priest is a *shukke* of mind and heart, but a social person with his body. He is a person having gone the Buddha way but who also guides and assists others in their religious lives. The ideal is to be what could be termed a "social *shukke*," walking the thin line between being neither too "religious" nor too "secular," being both *shukke* and *zaike*, a monk living *in* the world with a "homelessness of the heart."[20]

A survey from the Sōtō sect saying that most (73%) believers (*danshinto*) are interested in having a married priest (SSSMC 1993, 93) expresses well the social role of the priest and his family in especially small rural communities. Criteria such as age, family, children, and personality naturally play important roles in the images of the local priests, as does the extent to which they seem to be engaged in motivating the members toward religious or social activities. The social personality of the priest is very important for his "success" in the reciprocal relationship with his surroundings. His personality might attract members to meditation

---

[20] The term "homelessness of the heart" is from Akizuki 1990, 19. Shinran termed the concept *hisō hizoku*, meaning neither monk nor lay. See Reader 1989 on the relation between *shukke* and the extended family.

or study groups, or he may join members of the parish in playing golf or singing *karaoke*. His popularity and status depend on many variables and factors, and can be of an intellectual, social, or religious character, of an inherited or acquired competence.

Though priests are often highly respected, I have encountered lay persons who did not express overt recognition of priests as special persons. Priests are "used" in ritual contexts, but they are generally not revered as religious persons the same way as in, for instance, Southern Buddhist countries. Of course it can be argued that Mahayana priests are not even supposed to have as much status and power as the Theravada monks and priests. Though Karen A. Smyers herself questions the possible reasons and justification for making any generalizations, her observations that Shinto priests during her fieldwork seemed much more formal than the relaxed Buddhist priests might also suggest a typological division between compassionate Buddhism and ritualistic Shinto (1999, 36), between a more socially and more other-worldly engaged clergy. However, rather than explaining this in terms of doctrines and ideology, I think the main reason for the difference in power relations is due to structural and historical developments in Japanese religion. Buddhism does not have the same dominant position as in Theravada countries, and especially since the Meiji period, religion and its clergy (including Shinto) have lost power and influence. As early as 1959 a survey showed the social status of the Buddhist priest to "only" be between that of a policeman and a school teacher (Norbeck 1970, 68). Though seldom voiced in public, the negative image of Buddhist priests being merely materialistic and money-hungry "Cadillac priests" or performers of "funeral Buddhism" (*sōshiki bukkyō*), is a counterbalancing critique of them being too religious.

The way priests identify themselves with their profession naturally depends on their personal, social, and institutional interests and relations. Some are deeply interested in practicing "true" Buddhism, perhaps integrating the profession with secular professions, while others might consider the office as priest as just a job. I spoke to a priest of one of the subtemples in the main temple who wondered which of his two professions (scientist and priest) was actually his main job, seeing, as he said, the world as one person with two different eyes, his point being to combine the two. A Myōshinji layman voiced his concern from the other side of the table; since priests need to take side jobs, they have too little time for their parishioners, who might continue the vicious circle by losing interest in supporting the temple.

Lack of symbolic power could be one of the reasons why fewer young Japanese are interested in becoming priests. However, the responses to the problems and challenges of their office are naturally manifold. In a survey from 1985 (*Hakusho*, 26), 89% of respondents were generally satisfied with being priests—half of them because of the close contacts to people and 41% because of enjoying the role of being religious specialists (*shūkyōsha*). Those unsatisfied with the clerical position (9%) gave as reasons lack of personal religious consciousness (46%), financial matters (35%), lack of confidence in being a religious specialist (28%) and the ignorance of the believers (18%). The greatest worry (for the whole group of respondents) was missionary activities (*fukyō katsudō*, 24%),[21] finding a successor (20%), financial matters (10%), while only 2% listed "believers" (*danshinto no koto*, ibid.). In another survey from 1996 on the theme of changes from ordination until present (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 53–74), 29% of the 1,360 respondents answered that they had generally experienced the positive expectations they had in the beginning, 4% felt that reality had not lived up to their expectations. Thirteen percent were unsatisfied in the beginning, but had learned to accept the conditions as "fate" (*unmei*), while 38% were unsatisfied in the beginning but later had positive experiences. The majority (80%), however, did feel pride in being religious persons (*shūkyōsha*) from the Zen sect (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 98).

These figures of course cover and overlap with other problems, and the fact that 69% have a licence to teach (at public schools etc. *Hakusho*, 20) suggests that the office of being a priest does not in itself bring absolute satisfaction. One particular problem that I have discussed in private with individual priests, but which is often considered too delicate to be discussed in public, is the issue of personal rights and authority in the temple. The priest and his family live in and are representatives of the temple, but they do not own it themselves, and they are not alone in decision making. All changes in the temple—from painting and restoration to deciding the wages of the priest—are (ideally) to be discussed and decided by the priest and three lay representatives

[21] *Fukyō katsudō* covers all kinds of religious activities in the temples. Some individual remarks to the survey also state the disappointment of having too few people coming to the temple (*Hakusho*, 50). See also Horii 2006 on missionary activities and "structural deprofessionalisation".

(総代 *sōdai* or 責任役員 *sekinin yakuin*), who are usually, but not necessarily, members of the sect. The priest has 40% and each of the lay representatives 20% of the votes in these decisions, and if for some reason the latter in unison have some interests in controlling temple policy, they can do so. Also, if a new priest is appointed to a temple, the community might feel "their" temple to be taken away by a private "owner," who might even be from a distant metropolitan city, and thus a "stranger." A similar source of conflict is the relationship between the old priest and his assistant priest, the latter taking over the responsibilities and thus the power of the former. The priest decides himself when he wants to give over his position. He might promise the young assistant a period of three years of training before he can take over the office, but this period might in reality be extended for many more years, even until the old priest dies. This power play naturally can be a hard challenge for the priest-to-be, economically (he is not guaranteed any wages), psychologically (living in constant uncertainty), socially (probably with a family to share his own situation) and institutionally (his career being in the hands of another). Such kinds of problems are most often related to situations in which an outsider acquires the position of assistant priest.

An American priest—Martin Hughes, the first foreign Zen *jūshoku* in the Myōshinji sect—once told me of very concrete problems he had had with a powerful and apparently very greedy *sōdai*, who thought of the temple property as belonging to him personally. As he, and other local people from the community not even belonging to the sect, had economical interests in there *not* being a permanent priest, they tried in all possible ways to act against him. The headquarters did not assist him, since the issue was very touchy and a general political fight can do damage to the institution. Of course the fact that he was a foreigner—and a very argumentative one at that—did not help his situation. He did, however, also elaborate on his personal acquaintances with Japanese colleagues having heart problems, nervous breakdowns, and constant stress due to such "political" aspects of being assistant priests.

Of course, it goes without saying that a positive relationship between a priest and his *sōdai* (and the *danka*) is a valuable quality for the priest, as is the positive relationship between the priest and the assistant priest. At least according to official knowledge, this seem to be the rule. The fact that the priest and his family do not have defined limits of personal

life—guests walking into the living room during ceremonies, people expecting them to be at their service all year round, etc.—is a softer point of criticism that most priests seem to have adjusted to.

The priest wife and the Zen family

The word used for temple family is *jizoku* (寺族), defined as "person(s) other than priest, assistant priest, retired priest, or retired assistant priest who is registered at the temple or in the organization" (*Shūsei*, 306). The priest wife is termed *jitei fujin* (寺庭婦人, "temple wife") defined as "the spouse of a priest, an assistant priest, a retired priest, or a retired assistant priest, who is registered in the temple or church" (ibid. 306). Although never officially mentioned as the wife of a priest, *jizoku* is often identical to *jitei fujin*. Eighty-five percent of the priest wives in the Myōshinji temples are married to the priest, while 10% are married to the former priest (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 208). The majority (65%) are more than fifty years old (ibid.), and 23.8% were themselves born in a temple (ibid. 209).

Marriage was not officially accepted until early Meiji, but both Buddhist families as well as blood transmission from father to son was an old custom often accepted and legitimated in Buddhist Japan (Faure 1998, 193–97). Although today it is the norm rather than the exception that priests are married, women in Japanese Buddhism in general have been underprivileged. As Griffith Foulk says, "Zen and other schools of Japanese Buddhism have no monopoly on sexism; it is pandemic in Japanese society" (1988, 175). The same can be said of women in Buddhist history who have had the doubtful honor of being seen as impure and hindrances to male enlightenment. And although Bodhidharma has also been portrayed as a woman, and the Bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteshvara, in China and Japan changed sex to become the female goddess Kannon, these instances should primarily be seen as tributes to the semantic multiplicity of these figures rather than as expressions of equality between the sexes. Though not being tonsured, in 1958 Ruth Fuller Sasaki became *jūshoku* in the subtemple Ryōsen-an of Daitokuji. Some of her ashes are still preserved there, and in the *zendō* a picture of her indicates her importance. That she was the first female and foreigner to hold the office as priest within the Rinzai Zen tradition expresses well the fact that "Western Buddhism" has been much more progressive in this regard. Though recognized

as legitimate parts of the temple family by the lifting of the ban on clerical marriage (*saitai kaikin*) in 1872, being a priest wife has long been problematic, especially within the conservative Rinzai sect.[22] A letter to the editor of *Shōbōrin* in 1918 expresses the frustrations of being a priest wife and not being publicly accepted as such (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 24). The writer says she lives a miserable life in the shade calling for true recognition of the lifting of the ban of clerical marriage. A reply (ibid. 25) from another priest wife suggests she engage herself with the priest wives' association (*jinai fujinkai*, or *jitei fujinkai*—see 46) in finding cooperation and understanding. Though today it perhaps mostly has the image of merely being a group enjoying social gatherings, the political and institutional power of the priest wives' association should not be underestimated. Already from the early Meiji period, the association was an organ dealing with problems of the identity of a new title and institutional role.

The fact that the terms *jizoku* and *jitei fujin* were not officially recognized in the constitution until respectively 1961 and 1966 indicates the difficulties and the struggles of the women in a rigid patriarchal system, and although only few Japanese today would prefer ascetic monks in the temples, the wives still somehow have to adjust to former categorizations of temple women being taboo. Even today priest wives are sometimes referred to as "aunt" (*obasan*)—rather than the more common "*okusan*" (wife)—emphasizing the institutional and social, rather than the marital, status of the wife.[23] Female acquaintances of young unmarried priests have to be even more camouflaged in the terminology of biological or social relationships. The first time I met such an "aunt" while visiting a Sōtō priest some years ago, I was surprised to see what I thought was only warm emotional bonds between family members.

The constitution defines the role of the temple wife and family as follows:

> the *jizoku* and the *jitei fujin* must together with the priest work hard for the Buddha way, always protect the graves of the ancestors, worship the departed souls of the believers, work devotedly for the prosperity of the temple, and always strive to be a model for the believers (*Shūsei*, 306).

---

[22] For the conditions of *jizoku* within the Sōtō sect, see Uchino 1983.

[23] On internal discussions of these problems, see *Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 160–63.

Furthermore, priest wives must take part in priest wives' study groups (*jitei fujin kenshūkai*), keep the dignity of being a priest's wife, work for developing insight into one's own nature, and bring up successors (*Shūsei*, 306–7). In the earlier edition of the constitution it was also a prerequisite for the wife to "devote her life to protect the temple and cultivate society" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 158), to take the Buddhist precepts and have assigned a Buddhist name. This rule is not mentioned in the newest edition, perhaps due to discussions on whether such rules are infringing on other value systems such as human rights and religious freedom (see *Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 166).

The temple wife in many respects is locked into the traditional virtues of a mother and a wife (*Shūsei*, 161), representing family values and social status quo. In a guidebook for Rinzai priest wives—a supplement to the larger book for the priests—her duties, responsibilities, and identity are normatively explained (*Jitei fujin nōto* 1995). Norms of correct institutional *habitus* is seen to be a proper exchange for being a *jitei fujin*—an office carrying more than half of the adherents' trust on her shoulders, and an office that some would place above the position of an assistant priest. She is first of all the priest's wife, and therefore representing him, being his assistant and the "person behind" him and the temple. She cannot take over the position and official responsibilities of her husband if he dies or is out traveling. In such cases she has to apply to the headquarters for help in finding an assisting priest, if she does not have a son to take over. She has to identify herself with the atmosphere (*funiki*) of the temple, its peace and tranquility. She should avoid being both dirty and too bright, avoid wearing fashionable dress, and avoid using too conspicuous a lipstick. She should not speak too fast or one-sidedly nor too loud or too quietly, but with a gentle and obliging voice. The book also has chapters on styles of walking, sitting, bowing, opening the slide doors and answering the phone, on styles of welcoming guests, arranging sitting positions, serving tea, and social talking, on cooking devotional food (*shōjin ryōri*), on cleaning, and on the general responsibility of the family's well-being. A young woman asks how to participate in real temple management instead of just cleaning, cooking, and weeding the garden (she feels like a maidservant, *joshū*). The answer in the guidebook is to treat this work as a treasurable *samu* (devoted work), a kind of management important for the temple (ibid. 57).

Though not always having the same spiritualized role one might get the impression it has, from reading D. T. Suzuki and popular books on

Zen and Japanese culture,[24] there is a certain "taste of Zen" ascribed to some cultural activities, as can be observed in Myōshinji when students practice *kendō* and at Daitokuji, where the famous tea ceremony master Sen no Rikyu (千利休; 1522–91) is still celebrated, just like some teachers at the famous Urasenke tea school in Kyoto have profound interests in Zen Buddhism. Training symbols, rituals, systems, and ranks often correspond with Zen monastic codes and ideals, as does the underlying philosophy of physical and mental discipline. The Buddhist temple in general and the Zen temple in particular is a place where such fine arts and culture are ideally represented by the gracefully engaged temple wives. As culture bearers they are skilled in the arts of flower arrangements and tea ceremonies, virtues and duties also serving as the *samu* of the wives who might even conduct classes or special arrangements related to these fine arts.

That women and wives also want to live their lives as such and not merely as married to the temple, the institution and the community are also potentially troublesome domains with which many have to struggle. Priest wives often have to give up their own career to live with their parents-in-law, and even have to regard their home as the (shared) property of the community is another argument with which many young women refrain from saying yes to the temple life. Though 57.8% to some extent feel pride in being temple wives of a Zen temple (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 222), I have talked to several women who would never dream of becoming a *jizoku*, "racking their brains for ways to apply the Buddha-dharma to the current situation" (Kumamoto 2004, 480).

One of those who did end up a priest wife within the Myōshinji sect was Okada Mayumi. She was born in 1966 and raised by parents who had no particular interest in religion and in the beginning were a bit nervous to give away their only child to a temple family. Mayumi's love with Seihō (see 179), three years her senior, overcame her own hesitations. Like 17.7% of the other Myōshinji priest wives, she had a university degree (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 208) but settled with the idea of giving up a personal career; like 43.6% of the other priest wives (ibid. 212) she is not actively engaged in any other kind of profession. But even several years of marriage has not made her feel completely settled with her double role as a mother of two children and temple wife living with her parents-in-law in a remote country temple in Miwa-chō,

[24] Yamada 2001 thus goes beyond "The Myth of Zen in the Art of Archery."

northwest of Kyoto. She still recognizes the reason why many young women today hesitate to become priest wives, and why the divorce rates are remarkably high for temple families. She explained to me how it can be a burden to "carry the *danka* on one's back," and how her personal freedom was restricted on how to behave, what to do and not to do in a proper way corresponding to the expectations of the whole religious community. Unlike the 33.3% of the Myōshinji priest wives who discuss troublesome times with other priest wives (ibid. 210), she gives release to her personal worries with friends. As she said, she finds the temple world quite old and conservative with a stiff hierarchy, where one always has to be on guard regarding what to say to whom, depending on temple rank and seniority. The most important burden, however, has been the expectations to produce and bring up a boy as a future priest-to-be. When her daughter Nagomi was born, some *danka* openly expressed their wishes of Mayumi getting a boy next time, and when he, Toshimune, finally came to the world, she felt a certain relief. Mayumi has a wish that he will decide his future for himself. But she also knows that he will probably live up to the expectations of the family and community and serve as the new temple priest in the next generation.

Temple sons

The heritage system (*seshūsei*) is the most common way of transmitting and securing temple life in Buddhist Japan. The priest has to live according to the sayings "Before being a parent for his children, he is a teacher for his disciples" and "Before being a husband, he is a teacher" (*Kyōka biyō*, 59). The (eldest) temple son, on the other hand, is expected to be the successor (*kōkeisha*) inheriting his father's temple in the clerical generation shift (*sedai kōtai*).

Securing this institutional succession based on biological bonds is one of the major problems for all temple families. In a survey from 1985, 53% of the respondents themselves had inherited their position, while 62% had successors and 35% did not. On the other hand, though most priests are worried about finding a successor (後継者 *kōkeisha*), preferably his own son, the survey also showed that 62% did not feel the heritage system to be positive (*Hakusho*, 18). I have often heard of this paradox, revealing both emotional sentiments and open critique of a system tasting too much of the bygone *danka* system, the conviction of the ideological truth of the latter perhaps being the excuse of

practicing the former. Another survey showed that 32% of the priests would prefer their son enter a sect-oriented university (*shūmon daigaku*), while 38% would respect the child's own choice of education (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 63).

Securing the transmission of the temple to a son is of utmost concern to the (duties of) priest wives. If the son does not want to become a priest, the above-mentioned guidebook encourages her to tell him of the real qualities of the temple life as not only a place and profession of conducting funerals but as a sincere and important lifestyle involving happiness for both the family and the community (*Jitei fujin nōto*, 49). If there is no son in the family, an option of finding an interested son-in-law to take over is also a possibility. In the same way as the son might feel a pressure of responsibility, so would the young girl in having to become a priest wife for the sake of keeping the temple in the family. Both would be seen as gestures of natural ways of returning the received gratitude (*hō-on*) to one's parents.[25] The Hanazono University is supposed to be a proper place for making such arrangements, and, according to the guidebook, it is not rare to find notices from temple daughters searching for husbands (ibid. 54). But to more and more young people temple life in contemporary Japan seems to be a less opportunistic choice. It can be a problem for a priest to find a spouse, but it can also be a problem for him to convince his son about the necessity of keeping the temple tradition by having him step in his own footsteps and join the clerical career. Especially for a prestigious temple it is a problem if the son does not want to take over the temple, or if he does not spend the expected time in the training hall required from such a high-ranking temple. Though not voiced in public it can be a point of criticism that the person in charge is not really qualified ("that guy is no *shukke*"). Most parents in the temple therefore take measures to educate and socialize the son into the temple life as well as in other educational institutions.

A child in a temple is sometimes called *kozō* (小僧) or *hinasō* (雛僧), a "child monk" not yet registered in the institutional ranking system. A more common (and modern) term is *gakuto* (学徒). A *gakuto* is "a person who has received robe and bowl and a Buddhist name from his preceptor, having the rank below *shuzashoku*" (*Shūsei*, 264). In the constitution

[25] See Aoyama Shundō 1990, 138–40 on the well-known Sōtō nun's story of choosing monastic life as a way of gratitude for, and promise to, her dying father.

he is classified as a *sōryo* (ibid.), who potentially is an assistant priest. In practice *gakuto* is often used as designation for the temple son in general, a young Buddhist boy in practice before entering the training hall. The father is often the teacher and sponsor priest who also takes care of the ordination and the daily training of the boy.[26] It is, however, also a possibility for priests from other parts of the country to arrange with a temple in or around Kyoto to have their son stay when he is studying at Hanazono University. Senda Hōyū, whom I met in 2004 while he was sweeping outside the main buildings of the Myōshinji *honzan*, was a young *kozō* living in the *hōjō*, the living quarters of the abbot. As the successor of his father's country temple he came to study Buddhism at the university, assisting the abbot with daily chores until his graduation, after which he will enter the training hall. At nearby Daruma-dera it has also become a tradition for the priest to accommodate a *kozō*. Okada Seihō (see 179) stayed here while studying, and a young monk from Nha Trang in Vietnam, Hoang Ngoc Hai, in 2005 was living here throughout his three-year scholarship from the institution.

Nuns

Eikai Tsunoda was born in 1932. With five siblings she was living with her poor parents until they died when she was four years old. Her family had never had any close relations to a temple, and her parents were not really religious. But because of poverty, the local Buddhist nunnery (尼寺 *amadera*) lived up to its social responsibility and took her in as a new child nun. She has stayed in the monastery ever since, practicing seriously as a nun devoted to what later came to appear to her as a religious calling. Today she is the priest, the *jūshoku* of the only Myōshinji nunnery with own training hall in Japan, the Tenne Nishū Senmon Dōjō in Gifu prefecture. When I visited her in the late summer of 2004 she showed me a book with old photos from the period she has been staying at the monastery. Those were the days, she regretted, when comparing present circumstances with the time when there were up to fifty or even a hundred nuns in the monastery. She did, however, express an optimistic tone about the future. Since the reopening in 2002, the number of nuns has been increasing.

[26] According to a survey (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 57), 53% had their own father and 45% had a person outside the family as teacher.

In Myōshinji there are about 180 nuns living in 150 temples (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 156). Already in the early Meiji period a school for nuns was opened, Minō Nishū Gakurin in Gifu prefecture, and later also Bichō Nishū Gakurin in Aichi prefecture. Minō Nishū Gakurin also opened an adjoining training hall, Tenne Nishū Senmon Dōjō, giving nuns officially recognized monastic training with the possibilities of becoming priests. For many years within the whole Rinzai sect there was only one training hall for nuns, Enkō Nisōdō of Enkōji of the Nanzenji sect in Kyoto, and many nuns from contemporary Rinzai sects have thus had their religious training in the same training hall and under the same master. However, since the tragic death (suicide) of the *rōshi* in 1983, the nunnery closed down, and the reopening of Tenne Nishū Senmon Dōjō in Gifu in 2002 had long been anticipated, both by the institution and by the five nuns entering the *dōjō*. With the smaller section for mainly foreign women at Sōgenji, called Kokusai Nisōdō, this is presently the only Myōshinji nunnery in Japan. In 2004 there were eight nuns permanently living the monastic life, which is basically identical to the monastic lives of the monks. An important part of the practice is the daily *sanzen* interview with the rōshi at the training hall at Zuiryōji. Some come to get the experience and credit they need to get a license to become *jūshoku* themselves, inheriting their father's temple. And some join the training hall for just courses of two, three, or four days. These courses are primarily aimed at priest wives and daughters of temple priests wishing to get a deeper understanding and experience of the religion their father or husband preaches.

But living the life as a nun does not necessarily mean living in a nunnery. Kodaka Sōkyū was born in 1929. She had always been interested in religion, and raised as a Catholic she joined a Catholic school in Kyūshū. She read books about Zen and Buddhism, got interested in tea ceremony, and after studying at the prestigious Urasenke school in Kyoto became a tea ceremony teacher herself, developing natural bonds with Daitokuji, where the famous tea master Sen no Rikyū lived. When her husband died she became a *shukke*, an ascetic religious practitioner—not out of sorrow, she explained, but out of free will and to investigate in depth her longtime interest in spiritual matters, a decision she tested "to the bottom of her soul" by walking the pilgrimage route of eighty-eight temples in Shikoku. She became a disciple of Daitokuji Zen master Tachibaba, the former rector of Hanazono University, and was ordained at her sixty-second birthday. The same year she entered the Myōshinji Kokusai Nisōdō training hall at Sōgenji,

where she stayed for two years as a nun. After that she became a priest (*jūshoku*) in Sokyū-an, a small temple hermitage in Nara prefecture that she had built by herself. As an *anjū-san* ("master of a hermitage") and widow of a wealthy businessman she does not need *danka* or the income from conducting ceremonies. She does have what she described as true believers, *shinja*, who come for *hōwa*, *shakyōkai* (see 202) or advice on spiritual depth of Zen Buddhism. Still going strong in 2004 she was studying for her master's degree in Buddhism at Hanazono University and considering going on for a doctorate.

Probably Arai is right when she finds an androcentrically inherent hierarchy implicit in the vocabulary distinguishing monks and nuns. The generic term for monastic people, *sō* (僧), is also the term for (male) monks, whereas the term for nun, *nisō* (尼僧), is derived from this, perhaps suggesting that "monks are the 'real' Buddhist Community and nuns are a sub-Buddhist Community" (1999, 14)—which is why, according to Arai (ibid. 15), in female monastic vocabulary *sō* is translated monastic, *nisō* as female monastic, and *nansō* as male monastic. In Japanese reading the *ni* (尼) of *nisō* is read *ama*, simply meaning "nun," in daily speech often adding a honorific -*san* to it.

Although the Meiji government in 1872 issued a law allowing priests—and in 1873 also nuns—to eat meat, get married, and have free choice of tonsure, in reality for a nun to marry and not be tonsured means a return to the secular world (Uchino 1983, 179–80). Postwar Japanese Zen nuns have in some ways officially achieved equality, having the same ranking system as the male clergy (*Bukkyō kanrenzusho*, 118). But apart from a few famous individuals (as the above mentioned Aoyama Shundō from the Sōtō sect), Zen nuns live a life in the shade of the patriarchal majority. It is significant that the present as well as the former nunnery needed a male *rōshi* and that nuns are seldom mentioned in the written materials addressed to the lay members of the Myōshinji sect.

Nuns generally have the image of being nonfeminine, true opposites to the general female ideal in Japan where hair, makeup, female dress, and female behavior are some of the means to express gender.[27] This,

[27] Although the same to some extent is true for male priests, they do, however, have greater freedom to act in codes of behavior less strict than the codes of the nuns. The asexuality of the nuns of a former Rinzai (now independent) Zen temple in Kyoto

however, also gives them the image of being strict followers of "true" Buddhism. They live, contrary to their male partners, an ascetic life in which religious practice generally takes up more time than when living as parents in temple families. Sincere practice is, however, not always enough to follow a successful career. Though being qualified and interested in taking over her father's temple, biological and social hierarchical orders automatically make the eldest son the new priest. Stories of priests-to-be not at all being interested in religious affairs, but who—true to tradition, their father's wishes, or their own financial ambitions—end up taking over the management in spite of having a much more qualified sister is still not unheard of in contemporary Japan.

Not being married and having children, combined with the lack of monasteries and of possibilities of training new nuns, naturally results in the sincere problem of continuing the tradition. In a survey, 70% of the nuns said they had no successor, 93% of the respondents being fifty years and older (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 154). In a research report from the Kyōka Sentā the problems of the lack of nuns is discussed. A reevaluation of the method of acquiring qualifications to become a nun is suggested, mentioning the possible introduction of *ango-e* for women. Another somewhat vague suggestion is to take the initiatives in devising more positive images ("*imeiji appu*") of nuns and nun's life (ibid. 157). The Myōshinji sect of the Rinzai sect will probably not be the first to take such initiatives, but perhaps in the future Zen nuns will achieve the possibilities of marriage and equality.

2.3 The Laity

Householder or believer: Zaike, danka, *and* danshinto

When I met Kisino Kazuo in Kobe in 2004, he was still president of the lay organization of Myōshinji, the Hanazonokai (see 146). Being the official representative of an important category of people within the institution, I asked him to describe some types of laypersons.

> A *danka* is someone who through family tradition belongs to a temple, which takes care of funerals and religious ceremonies (*hōyō*) for ancestors. Being a *danka* is usually not an individual choice. Though you can

is twice a year recognized and complemented during a memorial service for dolls, in which a *geiko* and two *maiko* perform as very feminine "living dolls."

> personally believe in the teachings of the temple's sect, it is not necessary. A *shinja*, or *shinto*, is a person choosing to believe, disregarding which sect your family belongs to. *Danshinto* are all members of the temple-related family (*danka*), no matter what the personal belief of each individual might be. *Danshinto* can also simply mean a *danka* who believes the teachings of the sect. A *gudōsha*.

He said, not sure whether his pronunciation or apprehension was suitable for this apparently rather academic word,

> is the most important thing. These kinds of people have the strongest belief, just like the Christians in Nagasaki who were forced to step on pictures of Jesus to show their devotion to their religion in spite of pressures from political leaders. You see them in new religions, but seldom in the traditional religions in Japan.

Mr. Kisino is an affiliate of Entsūji temple near Himeiji, where he sometimes comes to assist in cleaning and helping with practical matters during religious ceremonies. In 1945 he was introduced to Christianity and soon thereafter baptized as a Christian. He was married in the church and came for services every Sunday. But in 1950 he came back to Buddhism and "traditional religion" (*dentō shūkyō*), belonging to the same sect as his parents and ancestors—not because of outside pressure, but because he chose another religious direction. "I often ask myself if I am a true Buddhist believer (*shinto*)," he wondered when I asked about his own religiosity. "I try to keep the precepts and have a deeper faith. Isn't that the best thing to do for a Buddhist?"

Just as there are different ways of being a *sōryo*, there are different ways to be a Buddhist layman. There are different concepts signaling different types and concrete individually differentiated personalities, explained and justified both in the materials from Myōshinji as well as revealed in practice. Some write intellectual essays to Buddhist magazines or participate regularly in *sesshin*, while others do not care at all about theoretical or religious matters. The terminology for types of laypersons itself shows differences in character and degree of commitment to the religious institution; from the *danka*-member as "passive" parishioner, to the believer (*shinto*, or *danshinto*) and the truth-seeker (*gudōsha*), or the actors and users outside institutional categories and the ones moving or transcending the *zaike-shukke* dichotomy.

Zaike (在家) means "being in the world," or "householder." Other concepts designating this status as lay include *zaizoku* (在俗, "layman"),

taishū (大衆,[28] "general public"), or simply *hisō* (悲僧, "nonclergy"). Lay Buddhists have always played important roles in Buddhist history, as donors of material goods to the monastic community and as conceptual opposites in the Buddhist institutional hierarchy. The lay concept has also had its own justification as an independent category, especially in modern Buddhism but also in different kinds of Mahayana Buddhism. In Japan, Shinran is said to have invented the idea of *zaike bukkyō*, lay Buddhism (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 61) as a legitimate way of being "true" Buddhist without being a renouncer. Focusing on belief (信, *shin*) and salvation from above (*tariki*), Pure Land Buddhism is naturally the quintessence of institutionalized lay Buddhism, though a clergy of nonmonastic priests serve the members in this sect, the largest Buddhist religion in Japan.[29] All modern lay Buddhist sects and movements have their roots in the aforementioned historical circumstances of the Meiji period, which gave rise to a general lay orientation in which lay Buddhism, or Buddhism for the populace (大衆仏教 *taishū bukkyō*), became permanent concepts, also within institutional Buddhism.

Danka (檀家) is etymologically related to the giving of *dana*, the Buddhist gift of charity.[30] Local temples are also called *danadera*, temples where gifts are exchanged. In actual use, a *danka* is a "household (or households) affiliated to a temple" (Marcure 1985, 40).

Although the *danka* system was officially abolished from early Meiji time, it is still used as the basic frame of institutional affiliation. *Danka* is on the one hand a category most Japanese belong to as individual members of a household "naturally" belonging to a temple. Seen from a different perspective, *danka* is only a situational category. As opposed to the clergy—a priest is always "essentially" a priest—many Japanese are not "triggered" as *danka*-members until somebody in the family dies. Before that happens many are not interested in religious affiliation,

---

[28] 大衆 is also, however, a term used for the group of monks in the *sōdō*, the "mass" of individuals as opposed to the master.

[29] Sōka Gakkai and Risshō Kōseikai are perhaps the most important and influential sects of the modern lay Buddhist movements, tracing themselves back to Nichiren, who have no clergy, although their leaders in many respects are more powerful than the priests from the other sects whom they like to criticize.

[30] A *danka* is thus a person giving charity (*hodokoshi o suru hito*), a layman giving (Buddhist) offering (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 12). See Marcure 1985 on the *danka* system, and 168 ff on exchange.

and/or simply do not know to which sect or temple they belong. When I asked a woman, who often came to the *honzan* in Kyoto, she only realized which religious sect (*shūha*) she belonged to after I pointed out that Ryōanji was also a Myōshinji temple. Although merely being passive transmitters of a bygone and highly criticized system is not something to be especially proud of, I have heard the concept being used by priests as well as self-referentially by sect members, some of whom were not even familiar with the concept *dan(shin)to*.

To counteract the negative image of being a religion of the past with only forced and passive membership, the lay members came to be termed believers. The term probably was inspired by Christianity during the Meiji period, but the "belief campaigns" were also part of the postwar sectarian struggle to keep their members (Nishimura 1983, 55).

Shinja (信者), *shinkōja* (信仰者), *shinto* (信徒) and the identification of the latter with *danto* (檀徒) in the concept *danshinto* (檀信徒) are all concepts expressing the ideal of individual adherents truly engaged in the religious theory and practice of the institution.[31] As such, the category corresponds to Winston Davis's ideal category of the devotee (whom he finds especially active in new religious movements): "stalwart believers who maintain self-sacrificing, loyal, long-term relations with religious institutions" (1992, 24).

Although it is widely recognized that many members are affiliated mostly because of custom (*shikitari*) and funerals (*Zau*, 60), the ideal believer is portrayed as having faith (信仰, *shinkō*) and interest in following the way of the Buddha and the patriarchs (*Zen seiten*, 409), but also as being institutionally bound and concerned with ritual services. The *danto* and *danshinto* (which are treated identically) in the Myōshinji sect is thus

> A person who believes in and reveres [*shinbō*] the doctrines [*kyōgi*], and who is a member of Hanazonokai. A person who belongs to a temple or organization [*kyōkai*] of the sect, and who asks for Buddhist services for his/her ancestors [*sōsen no butsuji, hōyō*]. A person who helps bearing

[31] There are different categories and concepts for defining and counting members within and across the individual sects and institutions of Japan. These are examples from the Agency for Cultural Affairs (1981, 236): supporters (*danto*), believers (*shinto*), members (*kaiin*), comrades (*dōshi*), parishioners (*ujiko*), worshippers (*sūkeisha*), seekers (*gudōsha*), companions (*dōnin*), followers of the way (*dōjin*).

> the expenses of maintaining and repairing the sect, *honzan*, temple and church [*kyōkai*] (*Shūsei*, 10).

How and the extent to which the members are engaged in using and contributing to the temple and the religious community naturally depends on individuals and context. Some are more dedicated to a life as a conscious Buddhist, as a "truth seeker" (求道組 *gudōgumi*), while others are mostly Buddhist by name or occasional affiliation. But contrary to the clergy, there is no institutional upward mobility. Those who have earned some respect and prestige (as for instance D. T. Suzuki or Hisamatsu Shin´ichi) did so because of other qualifications than being "good believers." Earning ritual merit and some institutional recognition is, however, possible through religious practice, to which we shall return later. A *danshinto* with outstanding merits can earn a special prize from the headquarters (*Shūsei*, 314). He can also apply for financial help if suffering damage from natural disasters, as for instance with the Kōbe earthquake.[32]

I have heard of no instances of sect members being excluded from the temple by the priest, but it is legally possible. The constitution gives the following criteria: if he/she rebels against the intentions of the sect (宗意 *shūi*), disturbs other people's belief, disturbs the maintenance and preservation of the temple, acts improperly toward the properties of the temple, or does not try to live up to the duty of being a *danshinto* (*Shūsei*, 309). In a guidebook for Rinzai priests, it is also directly stated or implied that those having a family grave but believing in the teachings of another religion, those only requesting services once, those not financially supporting the temple, and those only "using" the temple without being registered are not to be called *danto* (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 121–22).

In a later chapter I will describe the way the institution tries to make nonmembers into members (*kaiin*), *danka* into *danto*, and keeping and cultivating these as actors of the "same belief, same practice" (*dōshin dōgyō*).

[32] Repp (1995, 214–16) describes the emergency activities of the Myōshinji sect. There is also a group within the institution taking care of "mutual aid" (*kyōsaikai*) between priests and temple families.

Sect-transcending laity, users, clients, and occasional Buddhists

Danka/shintō is one emic typological pair of lay Buddhists within the institution. Another is between sect members and nonsectarian "users." The latter might belong to a particular sect, but their religious commitment and/or practice is also, or even primarily, related to affiliation with other groups, ideologies, or practices transcending sectarian boundaries.

Holmes Welch in the Chinese context also called such loosely related lay adherents "occasional Buddhists," being those who "used Buddhism in the same way a motorist uses one of the several different brands of gasoline, without any special commitment" (1967, 387). Davis defines "those people who establish only transient ad hoc relations with religious institutions" as "clients" (1992, 23–24). They do not constitute a static group nor a static form of religiosity. Some become affiliated to the institutions they "use," some drop in and out of different groups and practices, some are both affiliated with institutional and noninstitutional religion, and some use only aspects of Zen at specific times, maybe for nonreligious purposes. Unlike the typical *danka* they are not "cultural Buddhists," as tradition and geographical or social ties do not define and frame their religiosity. On the other hand, though such type of individually defined engagement is typical for postmodern cultures, it is also part of the traditional broad spectrum of being Buddhist or practicing Buddhism.

In one part of the spectrum we find religious groups or persons using Zen practices or temples in religious practice otherwise having no affiliation to Zen. In 1997 and 1998 I visited two religious institutions, the Catholic monastic community Seimeizan in Kyūshū and the Kyoto Kitayama Shūdōin north of Kyōto. Both places used *zazen* and different kinds of Zen aesthetics (e.g., a Zen garden, calligraphy), and at Seimeizan even a meditation hall (*zendō*) had been constructed. The leaders of both communities were very open to religious dialogue, especially between Christianity and Buddhism, and *zazen* was seen as a religious practice transcending religious affiliation.[33] At two Zen temples (one belonging to Myōshinji, the other to Daitokuji) the

[33] Both places are examples of syncretism in the sense of bringing together elements of different religious traditions while keeping them somewhat distinct. The Seimeizan, interestingly, is legally a supplementary temple, *betsuin*, of a Buddhist religious corporation, *hōjin*. The Shūdōin is known for its main double image (*honzon*) of Amida Buddha and Jesus sitting next to each other.

priests told me of religious groups—Seichō no Ie and Young People's Shinto Association—using the temple for religious meetings, the latter also participating in *zazenkai*. *Zazen* and monastic life as means of spiritualizing and socializing especially new employees are also widespread practices within a significant number of private companies.[34] These often see "Zen as a way of restoring the traditional values of discipline, obedience, and loyalty to superiors" (Victoria 1997, 182), an image that institutional Zen does not refrain from exploiting.[35] The companies may contact individual priests or the headquarters for arranging such courses, the amount and degree of religious content of which is not firmly established. One company using Zen not only to promote its own products, but also to promote Zen Buddhism itself (the manager is a devout Zen Buddhist) is behind the magazine *The Zen*. Daruma (Bodhidharma) is used as an icon, and the volume has included the series of "Daruma's dharma talk" ("*Daruma no hōwa*") and *Zest in Excellent Notion*, both being interviews with or essays by (mostly) prominent Zen Buddhists, many of whom are from the Myōshinji sect and some of whom were also lay people interested in Zen. Using Zen for purely commercial reasons without there being any kind of relationship to Zen institutions—tourist pamphlets on Zen gardens, municipal promotions of Kyoto as a city of (Zen) Buddhism, slogans or images on signboards, political rhetoric[36]—is also part of the way Zen Buddhism is used and is functioning in Japan. Naturally the whole commercial industry directly related to religious practice and institutions should also be included in this category—the "nonduality of Yen and Zen" being more than just a pejorative metaphor (Zürn 1987). The *butsudan* companies, the undertakers, the producers of certain objects used in rituals, the local mafia expanding their business at funerals, the taxi drivers transporting priests to ceremonies at other temples, or the owners of sake or flower shops providing priests or ancestors with objects of ritual consumption all use—more or less consciously—Zen Buddhist institutions, symbols, or persons.

---

[34] Frischkorn 1990, 113 cites two professors who suggest that 45–50% of all Japanese companies integrate Zen practice. See also Rohlen 1973 and Victoria 1997, 182–87.

[35] See Frischkorn 1990, 34–39 on a Myōshinji priest identifying the Buddha way with secular work, comparing the Zen monastery with the company.

[36] E.g., a former prime minister (Nakasone Yasuhiro) made a point of saying he was a Zen Buddhist. In election campaigns, large Bodhidharma dolls are used as charms and indicators of the results.

Religious confraternities

Though most Japanese in one sense are only "cultural Buddhists" or "occasional Buddhists," they tend to "stick to the old brand." This they can do because they can supplement institutional religion with religious practice and affiliation transcending it.

An important non-, or semi-institutionalized religious group more actively engaged in religious practice across sectarian boundaries is found in the concept of *kō* (講). *Kō* originally meant a Buddhist lecture or lecture meeting, but also came to denote the agents, "those present at a Buddhist lecture meeting and the members of a religious fraternity" (Hori 1968, 38). Synonymous to *kō* is *kōsha, kōja, kōshū, kōju*, and *kessha* (結社), concepts that designate a group of individuals, "confraternities," or lay groups, which are often led by noninstitutional shamanlike religious specialists, with or without the cooperation of temple priests. These often have a common goal or object of interest, whether it be a god or Buddha, special rituals or places of worship and pilgrimage.[37] Groups mainly worshipping Kannon (and to a lesser extent Amida, Jizō and Fudō) are common in Japan, as are transsectarian pilgrimage and ritual practices (such as chanting *nembutsu* or *daimoku*). *Kō* may also have other common denominators such as sex, age, or locality and can be classified somewhere in between those religious groups based on community bonds and those based on belief (Shimada 1986, 212).[38] In a book from Myōshinji, a *kōjū* (講中) is described as an organization of participating members aiming at achieving miracles (*reigen*) on auspicious days (*ennichi*) (*Zen Q & A*, 153). In chapter 3.6.5, I will give an example of a *kō* in action.

Teaching assemblies and lay organizations have existed since the arrival of Buddhism in Japan. Especially since the Kamakura period they have gained widespread significance, and in the Meiji period (around 1882) they had their peak (Ikeda 1998, 25). Davis suggests that there is a general decline of the *kō* in postwar Japan as well as in the "social and material exchanges (e.g., feasting, fun, and games) which took place in the *kō* when the institution was in its heyday" (ibid. 30). He sees the reasons for the decline of these associations in

---

[37] See Ikeda 1998, 12 (also translators note 3), and Davis 1992, 27–30.

[38] *Dōzoku* (同族) is the Japanese kinship branch system with trunk (superior, parental) and branch families (inferior, children), functioning through genealogy and hierarchy—metaphors that religious sects also structure themselves around.

the fact that the secular roles they used to play in the local communities were not needed anymore and in the fact that former obligatory participation of some groups (also other than *kō*) in modern times has become voluntary, resulting in either the abandoning of such groups or replacement by other activities or kinds of associations such as civil, or new, religious groups.[39] It is, however, also certain that many of the activities and much of the raison d'etre of the *kō* have been incorporated or subsumed under institutional and sectarian activities. Historically, this attempt in putting lay societies under the command of the institutionalized teaching assemblies (教会 *kyōkai*) was a natural consequence of the religious politics in the mid 1880s where sectarian institutions became more regulated and independent (Ikeda 1998, 28), and thus, at least for some time, more powerful. Regulations for *kyōkai* and *kō* were seen as efficient means of proselytizing and making institutional bonds to the lay members who, as affiliated *danka* or nonaffiliated "users," were potential members now free to be guided with religious education (*kyōka*) into a stronger institutional commitment as registered (and thus more controllable) members. Though still a theme of recent research, Ikeda says that Buddhist teaching assemblies (*kyōkai*) and lay societies (*kessha*)[40] "played a leading role in establishing the structure of the modern Buddhist institutional system" (ibid. 1998, 11), becoming the "smallest organizational elements of each sect" (ibid. 35). Much of the religious practice in the Myōshinji sect is actually defined as *kō*-activities (e.g., *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 89),[41] and the many *kai* ("gatherings," which I will describe later) undoubtedly have found inspiration, or have directly originated, in the premodern *kō*.

That religious practice and affiliation is not always limited to being either institutionalized or not is exemplified by the way many temples

[39] See Davis 1977, 67–68, and 62–63, where he sees parallels between *kō* and *miyasa*. In a book from the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs (1981, 90) the *kō* is seen as the prototype from which the new religious movements emerged.

[40] Whereas *kyōkai* was originally a legal term with certain Christian undertones—which it still has—used in promoting modern religious policy in the post-Meiji times, *kessha* (which in this sense is identical to *kō*) resembled the traditional aspects of lay groups. *Kyōkai* represented an "organization belonging to the traditional school, while the 'lay society' embodied a group formed out of common belief, but both were intimately related through the ties of oneness between clergy and laity" (Ikeda 1998, 34–35).

[41] The *hō-on-kō* ("gatherings of paying back received gratitude and favors") of the Pure Land sects are probably the largest examples of sectarian institutionalized groups, serving as a means of paying respect to the founder, Shinran, as well as strengthening the institutional commitment and faith in Amida Buddha (Davis 1992, 28).

and local Hanazonokai groups interact with, or are part of, local trans-sectarian Buddhist groups (e.g., Bukkyōkai), where lay people and priests meet for study and practice. The identity of the members as well as the content of the activities of the *kō* and the local Hanazonokai groups might also be identical. Comparing the materials and time schedules for meetings of the local Hanazonokai, the Kannonkō and the trans-secterian Bukkyōkai of Miwachō (a village northwest of Kyoto) reveals generally the same programs and content, and the priest of one of the temples (Kōunji) told me that many of the members were engaged in all groups. Interestingly, the Kannonkō functioned and was structured as a subgroup of the local Hanazonokai. Another example of how religious practice is not dependent on an absolute distinction between voluntary and obligatory, between sectarian and nonsectarian affiliation I witnessed at a Hanazonokai ceremony after a larger priests' ceremony in the Buddha hall (*butsuden*) in the Myōshinji *honzan*. Several of the participating women had no strange feelings and felt no self-contradictions in the fact that they belonged to different sects, and mostly joined the group for social reasons—even though the Hanazonokai was established to create institutional and sectarian commitment and consciousness.

2.4 Mixed Categories

Intellectuals, critics, and enlightened laymen

In the early Indian Buddhist communities lay supporters counted different categories. Householders, kings, warriors and priests (*brahmin*) were listed, as were renouncers (*paribbājaka*), who perhaps "accepted the teachings of the Buddha without formally joining the sangha" (Chakravarti 1987, 132). There were laymen living as monks in lay life, a "religious virtuosi" taking and living by the ten precepts. And even though a Pali text says that enlightened persons will either naturally join the sangha or die (Gombrich 1988, 73), there were also accounts of enlightened laymen. Mahayana doctrines (two truths, Buddha nature, Bodhisattva ideal, *upāya* hermeneutics, etc.) as well as its East Asian socioreligious history opened further for theoretical readjustments between lay- and monastic Buddhism. The operation of making philosophical and rhetorical points in mixing categories is naturally not a unique Chan/Zen invention. But although it is seldom reflected in reality of the institutional history, and although the points of the discourse(s) only constitute one side of the coin, idealizing the "ordinary

man" (*bonbu*) as a true Buddhist is a known theme within Chan/Zen, in which ordinary life is sanctified and the sacred banalized (Faure 1991, 124), expressed through persons such as Vimalakirti, Hanshan, Shide, and layman Pang. Bodhidharma's words that "the common man sees the ultimate in the conventional, while the sage sees the conventional in the ultimate" (ibid. 54) and Linji's Zen paradigm of the true man with no rank (無位の眞人 *mui no shinnin*) being "ordinary with nothing to do—defecating, urinating, putting on clothes, eating food, and lying down when tired" (Sasaki 1975, 117) are clear evidences of the world-affirming naturalness to which much of the tradition's ideals and rhetoric ascribe. Both of these masters were monks, as was Dōgen, whose apparent openness to both women and lay people practicing true Buddhism has been used by modern apologetics to legitimate a true Zen tradition. The illiterate layman Huineng also became a monk—defeating his competitors with their institutionally recognized knowledge with his spiritual lay wisdom—and layman Pang had to cultivate his merits in monastic training. In other words, these figures—some of them probably only literary constructions and, as Faure (1986) says of Bodhidharma, textual paradigms[42]—remained within the system. Their textual functions, I would suggest, are parallel to the functions of the wild, strange, or crazy Zen figures, the freak Zen masters (*hōge no zenji*), the thaumaturges, tricksters, and literary Bodhisattva ideals of the Chan/Zen "rhetoric of immediacy" and other related Chan/Zen paradigms (Faure 1991). They mainly serve as individuals transgressing boundaries in necessary dialectical movements, underlining doctrinal truths or axiomatic "loose paradigms" to which there cannot be any final answers, oscillating between denial and affirmation, between taboos and structure, unity and diversity, hierarchy and its denial. They are breaking the rules in order to reaffirm them, challenging institutional

[42] That these "weird and strange" (*irui igyō*) Zen monks were also actual living individuals expressing their sacred wisdom in grotesque, wild, strange manners and unconventional (*basara*) style is suggested by Faure (1998). Dōgen's criticism of the "naturalist heresy"—primarily directed against followers of the Daruma-shū and its founder, who had no institutionally sanctioned education—also suggests concern for the institutional realities of marginal figures (see Faure 1987). After Muromachi, this marginality apparently became negative, and especially in the Tokugawa period—and, I believe equally true, until modern times—"these 'weird people' lost their 'silver lining,' their stronghold on the people's imagination" (Faure 1998, 202).

hierarchies and yet reaffirming them.[43] "Patriarchal Zen" was not really challenged until modern times.

The socioreligious changes following the Meiji restoration, and to a lesser extent the period after the Second World War, gave rise to a similar, and reversely directed, approach to the categories. The general tendencies of laicization, modernization, individualization, and religious emancipation gave lay Buddhists possibilities of upward religious mobility. Often practices and symbols from the institutional Great Tradition were copied, reformed, or reinterpreted, as were those from the West, giving rise to both invented traditions and "Protestant Zen" (Sharf 1995, 250). Rather than focusing too one-sidedly on these new tendencies as isolated discourses of a small Western educated elite (Sharf 1993), it is necessary to stress the interrelatedness of agents and ideas between East and West, between Great and Little Traditions (Borup 2004). Modern lay Zen (居士禅 *koji zen*) became a reality, both as an institutional group phenomenon and as a network of mainly intellectual individuals.

D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) is naturally the most famous Zen layman.[44] Apart from his main project of introducing Zen to the West he has also had an enormous influence on the Japanese scene. He was a living symbol of the modern mostly intellectual, reform Zen, honored as eminent (enlightened) layman (居士, *koji*),[45] Bodhisattva, teacher (*sensei*), doctor (*hakushi*), thinker (*shisōka*), and even mistakenly referred to as both priest (*jūshoku*) and Zen master (*rōshi*). Suzuki's relationship to the two Zen masters and abbots Imakita Kōsen (1816–92) and Shaku Sōen (1859–1919), who themselves were active in modernizing and propagating Zen to the community outside the monastic walls, is interesting in itself.[46] While generating new patterns of mutual influence between monastic and lay Buddhism the partnership between, in particular, the unique personalities Suzuki and Sōen was also a typical Meiji phenomenon not really having had its equal ever since. Though both were from the "Engaku circle" (Sawada 1998) in Kamakura they also had some affinity to Kyoto and Myōshinji. Shaku Sōen had trained

[43] "The claim of having 'no rank' can become one of the (more or less conscious) strategies to get a rank, or to keep it" (Faure 1991, 39).

[44] On Suzuki, his effect, and the environment around him, see Sharf 1993, Faure 1993, Snodgrass 2003, and Borup 2004.

[45] *Koji* in China and Japan came to have a more honorific status than the Indian *gaha-pati*, householder, from which it is translated.

[46] Already in 1875 Imagita Kōsen had established Ryōmō Kyōkai ("The Society for Abandonment of Subjectivity and Objectivity") near Tokyo as a *zendō* for lay people.

at the Myōshinji *dōjō* in Kyoto and Okayama, and from 1914 to 1917 he was the president of what later became the Hanazono University, where Suzuki also came to lecture, and where both today are still studied. The "Suzuki effect" (Faure 1993, 11) was perhaps even greater than his personality, abroad and at home. With his intellectual (and social) partnership with the philosopher Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945)—who also had practiced for many years at Myōshinji and has a memorial place in Reiun-in—many students from Kyoto University, lay as well as later monastic, were deeply influenced by them. Some of these later became parts of the Kyoto School or the New Kyoto School, both using Zen—and, it is suggested, propagating Japanism (Faure 1993 and 1995b). One of these students was Hisamatsu Shin´ichi (1889–1990), "a contemporary Vimalakirti" (Hakamaya 1997, 125). Being introduced to the *rōshi* Ikegami Shōzan by Nishida (under whom Hisamatsu had studied), he trained at Myōshinji as a lay practitioner. Later, influenced by Nishida, his friend Suzuki,[47] and his experiences from the university and the monastic world, he pursued his interest in lay Zen Buddhism: "The completion of this Religion of Awakening and Philosophy of Awakening was his primary concern, and his eternal task" (Hisamatsu 1985, 27), he says with his own words. Being opposed to institutionalized Zen and its often promilitaristic sympathies, Hisamatsu in 1944 with other intellectuals established the still existing lay Zen group called FAS, an abbreviation of *F*ormless Self *A*ll Humanity *S*uperhistorical History. The group, whose name and structure has changed throughout its history, was also an alternative to the Japanese YMBA (Bukkyō Seinenkai), which Hisamatsu had been asked to reform or replace (Cooke 1974, 294).[48] This small group meets once a week to do *zazen*, study and discuss (Zen) Buddhism and the teachings of Hisamatsu. Once participating in a *zazenkai* in 2000, I asked about the religious affiliation of the handful of participants. A few were affiliated with the Jōdō-shū and Jōdō Shinshū, one with Shingon and one with Shinto. None of them had any feelings toward their own institutional religion, but had turned to Zen and especially the ideas of Hisamatsu and the practice of the FAS society. Talking in 2004 to one of the members, Tokiwa Gishin, his linguistic fluency, international focus, spiritual

[47] Hisamatsu also edited the complete works of Suzuki in thirty volumes.
[48] On Olcott, YMBA and the relation between Theosophy and (Japanese) Buddhism, see Borup 2004.

approach to insight, and academic approach to knowledge struck me as being quintessential for this group, which he in some sense has been representing for many years. At 19 he joined the group in 1944 after enrollment at Kyoto University, where Hisamatsu was one of his very influential teachers. Although being born as a son of a Buddhist priest from the Pure Land tradition, Tokiwa had never experienced meditation as he did in the Buddhist classes at university. He also tried *zazen* at Myōshinji, but soon found their style much too formalistic, their institution too old-fashioned, and the human relations based too much on hierarchy. Some of his fellow students even wanted to join the Myōshinji training hall but were rejected. Instead, Togiwa found Hisamatsu's approach and the whole idea of "FAS Zen," as it is sometimes called, to be much more in accordance with his own ideals. Still today he feels the humanity and the human ideals to be representing an important voice of contemporary Japanese Zen Buddhism. Rather than focusing on local and institutional relations they are individuals with a universal aim, as expressed in many of the articles and essays published in the FAS journals.[49] Instead of employing monastic hierarchies, they sit in a circle on the floor facing each other; instead of a *rōshi* giving different kōan and enlightenment certificate to his successors, they are, so to speak, their own masters, using only one "fundamental kōan"[50] created by Hisamatsu. As an indication of its lay orientation, and yet fidelity to the tradition, a calligraphy by Hisamatsu of Linji's saying of the "ordinary man with no rank" hangs on the wall in their meeting room. Both Hisamatsu and the FAS society are generally respected by Zen intellectuals and Rinzai institutions. The fact that they meet in a subtemple in Shōkokuji (Rinko-in), and before that in the prestigious Reiun-in in Myōshinji, where former abbot Yamada Mumon out of respect for the group lent a room for practice, also indicates institutional acceptance. The former abbot at Shōkokuji was a personal friend of Hisamatsu, as were others from the monastic world, and according to one of its members a few priests have even participated in the weekly *zazenkai*, where attendance is typically as high as ten people. In 2004 there were 100 members paying a periodical fee and 200 names on a list of interested persons.

[49] These are especially expressed in "The Vow of Humankind"; see, for instance, Hisamatsu 1990–91. On Hisamatsu, see also Hisamatsu 1985 and Sharf 1993.

[50] The kōan goes: "Right now, if nothing you do is of any avail, what will you do?" and can be found in Hisamatsu 1979.

Lay Zen is, however, also practiced within institutional frames, and in Myōshinji, as I will later describe. Some temples have special rooms for lay people, or even allow them to stay with the monks in the *zendō*, and some old temples have even been converted to "open" *dōjō* for lay people wishing to live a monastic life for a period, without having to become monks. The religious corporation Sanbō Kyōdan has been especially known for its openness toward both foreigners and lay people, and although Sharf regards the sect as an example of a Japanese New Religion promoting "democratization of enlightenment" (1995, 437) by excessive use of enlightenment certificates, some of the main leaders (primarily Harada Daiun and Yasutani Hakuun) are, according to many of my informants from the "intellectual" Zen environment, considered to have been genuine Zen masters. These leaders also influenced the Myōshinji environment, just like some of the successors of the group studied under Myōshinji individuals such as Yamada Mumon and Harada Shōdō (Kirchner 1996, 51n). When in autumn 2000 I visited the main center of the group Hosshinji in Ōbama, a foreign monk told me that some of the practices had been "straightened up" and somehow adjusted more to the traditional Sōtō sect. Nagaoku Zen Juku in the southern part of Kyoto is an example of a pure "lay temple," although both prominent Zen intellectuals and people from the clerical world have stayed there. It was established in 1933 by a wealthy businessman, and managed since then by Zen *rōshi* from different lineages. When I visited the *juku* in 1996 only a few students lived there, studying during the day, performing monastic chores in the mornings and afternoons. Though not related specifically to Myōshinji, another lay Zen group worth mentioning is Ningen Zen. The name means "People's Zen"—or as they translate it themselves, "Zen for character building"—and they characterize the aim of lay Zen thus:

> Unlike Zen practiced by monks at temples or Zen practiced by lay people under the guidance of priests, koji Zen is composed of lay practitioners and masters who also have their own profession. Zen teachings are transmitted and propagated by such people—company workers, housewives, students and so forth—actually working and studying as active members of society. Because of this characteristic, each of the practitioners incorporates Zen into each moment of his or her life as a member of society. Along with sincere self-formation and the attainment of a peaceful mind, the power of enlightenment attained by Zen practice will naturally grow inside practitioners, who will then serve their society through their professional fields. This is the true aim of *koji* Zen. Nothing else is. (www.ningenzen.org/lay.html)

Seventeen chapters and sixteen *dōjō* around Japan are the physical manifestations of this group, whose roots go back to the early Meiji days and Rinzai masters such as Tesshu Yamaoka and Kosen Imakita. In 2005 there were hundreds of people, a majority of them male, meeting regularly for *zazenkai* and periodical *sesshin*.

In many ways historical circumstances and general tendencies to outstretched hands from both laity and the "Great Traditions" have given the possibilities of harmoniously mixed, or inverted, categories. Lay Zen is, however, also in itself a slogan, a rhetorical means with which to legitimate changes or to maintain status quo. Both Hisamatsu and Akizuki Ryōmin, another modern lay Zen apologist who had trained at Myōshinji (under Yamada Mumon) and taught at Hanazono University, criticized institutionalized Zen. Akizuki was influenced by both Suzuki and his friend Hisamatsu. He also embraced the founder of the Zen movement "Sākyamuni Association" Shaku Jōkō's encouragement to "kill all the priests and burn all the temples in order to bring Zen back to life" (Akizuki 1990, vii), before he began to "join forces with the temples and monks to work for the reform of Buddhism" (ibid. 19), resulting in his ideas of a *New Mahayana, a Buddhism for a Post-Modern World*, the title of one of his many works (1990). As he finds that "the Buddhism of the establishment is dead" (ibid. 61), the only real survivor of true and original Buddhism must be the Buddhism of the laity. Another critique of institutional Zen comes from Hakamaya Noriaki and Matsumoto Shirō, two distinguished professors at the Sōtō Zen Buddhist university Komazawa. Their position has been termed "critical Buddhism" (*hihan bukkyō*), which Steven Heine describes as a "widespread response to a sense of frustration and disappointment in Buddhism, which appeared to be an anachronistic, authoritarian, dogmatic, and socially rigid institution instead of a genuinely contemporary, progressive, and flexible advocate for justice and reform" (Heine 1997, 256). The "critical Buddhism effect" has caused discussion, reflection, and reaction in the (Zen) Buddhist world, though no institutional response have been officially voiced.[51]

[51] Matsumoto has since then parted from Hakamaya, the latter having left both Komazawa University and the Sōtō school, both the academic and the religious life, being active in more general public debate.

Nishimura Eshin, professor and former president of Hanazono University and himself a priest in the Myōshinji sect, in his book *Zen for the Masses* (*Taishū zen*, 1983) takes on a different critical perspective. He is generally positive toward the modernization of Buddhism and of the incorporation of lay members in the Zen tradition. But he also stresses the tendencies of devaluating true Zen in the name of popularization (ibid. 51–57) and "culture Zen" (ibid. 47–50), in which even cats can join in the choir of saying "Zen" (ibid. 124). Nishimura's position is that of an intellectual religious specialist. As part of the system he has to defend it, and yet challenge it by expressing concern for losing sight of "true Zen." Hisamatsu and Akizuki and other individuals standing outside, or with only one leg in the institutional system, are more free to raise voices of criticism without having to be responsible to the institution. The institution naturally has to be careful in participating in public rhetoric, and usually responds to criticism with silence, or with attempts to incorporate the criticism as part of a general Zen discourse, showing the broadness and attentiveness of the institution.

Lay Zen and criticism of institutional orders have become a modern reality, and, as in classical Chan, are still a topic of strategic discourse. Most persons from the Zen clergy still prefer a dichotomy in which there are *essential* differences between *shukke* and *zaike*. Laypersons can *theoretically* become dharma-heirs (*hassu*) within the institution, but no matter how wise or spiritually developed they might be, in the eyes of many of the clergy they will always remain lay persons. As Nishimura apparently teased Abe Masao: "Did anybody get enlightened through FAS? They are always discussing it, but has anyone really gotten enlightened?" (Shore 1986–87, 17). Turning the argument upside down one could also say that if the clerical institution acknowledged and certified too many lay people as enlightened, they would dig their own grave as legitimate carriers of the tradition. Blurred and mixed categories are, as demonstrated by Mary Douglas (1966), dangerous. They are challenging both mental categorizations and social hierarchies, which is why they are also constructive topics of Buddhist "skillful means" in creative discourses. For individuals or groups with strategic interests, mixed categories and criticism can be dynamic tools of change and reform. Or they can be used as fields of discourse reaffirming tradition: Whether criticizing the institution in order to promote lay Buddhism or a more "pure" monastic Buddhism, both approaches typically idealize an original and "essential" Buddhism before degeneration and beyond

manifest realities to which both the institution as well as those outside it aspire and claim the right to represent. The Myōshinji institution paradoxically has to encompass distinct as well as mixed categories of agents.

Foreigners

A few foreigners, primarily Americans, have settled permanently or periodically in Japan mainly because of their appreciation of Zen. Although relatively small in numbers, and though they could be subsumed under both "users" and "mixed categories," the way the typical Zen-interested foreigners use Zen is interesting enough to justify a distinct category.

The typical Zen foreigner has an interest in *zazen* practice and the intellectual and/or aesthetic sides of Zen. He or she will typically have no institutional affiliation, no interests in priestly ranks, and no interests in either "funeral Buddhism" or rituals, and as such the typological distinction between "two Buddhisms" is ascribable also to a Japanese Zen Buddhist context, but with the twist that the "ethnics" are the natives and the "converts" are the immigrants.[52] He/she has read D. T. Suzuki and Alan Watts in his/her youth, perhaps for a period becoming (or learned from his/her parents the qualities of being) a bohemian beat zennist or Dharma Bums, and either somehow still ascribing to this "Westernized Zen" or negating it after having experienced the "realities" of Japanese Zen.[53] D. T. Suzuki was himself active in introducing Westerners (Americans) to Japan. One of these was Ruth Fuller Sasaki, who in the 1950s in Daitokuji had a handful of both Americans and Japanese studying, researching, and practicing Zen, among whom were Yanagida Seizan, Philip Yampolsky, and Gary Snyder (Fields 1992, 208–9).

---

[52] The distinction between ethnic Asian immigrant Buddhists and convert Buddhists in the West in recent years has become a much used and discussed model; see, for instance, Numrich 2003. Jiyū Kennett is an example of a (female) Westerner ordained as a (Sōtō) Zen priest being interested in rituals. See 1972 and some of the books published by the Shasta Abbey (which she founded) containing ritual texts and descriptions of ritual procedures, some of them in form and design reminding of Christian liturgical books.

[53] Victor Sōgen Hori is an example of a foreigner returning to academic life after having "gone native" as a Zen Buddhist monk in Daitokuji. He began his "Eastern career" by studying Western analytical philosophy at Stanford University, and only reluctantly being introduced to books by Suzuki and Watts, resulting in "irritation at the vast sweeping claims made by the authors who seemed to write more for rhetorical effect than for truth" (1999, 47).

Some have lived in monasteries for some time, and the Myōshinji *dōjō* at Empukuji, Ryūtakuji, Sōgenji, and Shōgenji in particular are known for their openness to foreigners. This is not due to these being "second class" *dōjō*. On the contrary, they are highly prestigious, with a respected genealogy of patriarchs whose charismatic personalities, often combined with English capabilities, have been magnets for foreigners, and a "show window" for the institution. The perhaps best known rōshi in the West is Harada Shōdō (1940–) from Shōgenji, the spiritual master of the American Tahoma One Drop Zendō, which also has centers in European countries. One of the people living there is Priscilla Daichi Storandt. She only intended to stay there for a couple of months but ended up living there for twenty-eight years (Storandt 2003, 36). Her reflections on Western Zen are quite suggestive: "Contrary to the Japanese, Americans want instant achievements. How should I become enlightened in a week? Not even after two times of *sanzen*? This is the difference between Westerners and Easterners" (ibid.).

Some stay in the *sōdō* for many years. I have met persons who after twenty or thirty years are still monks, with no plans of retiring. Some stay in Japan after leaving the training hall, combining secular jobs with religious practice as technically being *sōryo* without priestly functions.[54] Others drop out of monastic life after some time, either giving up the idea of completing kōan practice and aspirations for spiritual or institutional rank or continuing practice as lay practitioners.[55] I only know of two foreigners having acquired both priestly functions and their own temples within the Rinzai sect. John Toler trained at Daitokuji, first as a layman and later as a full-time monk, until he with the title of assistant priest had his own temple south of Nara (Borup 1998, 69–71). Martin Hughes was the first (and, so far, only) foreigner with the title of priest (*jūshoku*), having his own temple in a suburb of Ōsaka. Most Westerners getting a taste of Zen in Japan only choose to get it in small doses, either participating in *zazenkai*, doing "Zen zap" with

[54] An example is Thomas Kirchner, who has stayed in different Rinzai monasteries. He is now living in a subtemple of Tenryūji, working part-time at the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism (IRIZ) at Hanazono University and not interested in institutional titles nor priestly functions.

[55] Jeff Shore was a full-time monk at Tōfukuji until he left the *sōdō* to continue practicing *zazen* and *sanzen* as a lay practitioner under the same *rōshi*. Being a teacher, researcher, and translator at Hanazono University, he is also actively engaged in the FAS society, translating many of Hisamatsu's works.

the "Zen Guide" (Roth and Stevens 1985) as companion, or staying for shorter or longer periods at some of the monasteries open only for short-term residents. In recent years Myōshinji has opened an International Zen Center (*kokusai zendō*), first situated in Hiroshima prefecture (*Shinshōji*), later moving to Kameoka northwest of Kyoto, changing its name to Kyoto International Zendo (Tekishin Juku Kyōto Kokusai Zendō). The center in Kyoto is divided into two temples (Tōkōji and Jōtokuji), both administrated by Hōzumi Genshō, who in other respects has been engaged in religious dialogue and internationalizing Zen. Noritake Kotoku, who was the daily leader of Shinshōji, has, due to controversies, opened his own training hall, Hōsenji Zen Center (close to the "official" international center), to foreigners. I have visited both, staying at the former among fifteen other mostly young Westerners and Japanese. Most had no affiliation to institutional religion. Some were simply tourists wishing for an exotic experience of monastic life; others were more consciously interested in a "spiritual life" in which *zazen* and "living with a Zen mind" were particular reasons to stay at the temples. A few of these I later met (or heard of) being monks in "real" monasteries.

As in all Asian countries, there is a certain ambivalence toward Western Buddhist monks and practitioners. On the one hand, as foreigners they are respected for being sincere in their individually having chosen monastic life rather than merely complying with "tradition" or social pressure. On the other hand, they come from outside the system and are not really "one of us." Although there are naturally many long-lasting friendships between fellow monks continuing beyond the time spent in the training hall, I have also heard stories of Westerners not really having been accepted as "true" monks, some even having experienced negative discrimination. While the Rinzai sect is perhaps the most conservative of all Japanese Buddhist institutions, there too foreigners in the future will probably take part in the upper levels of the institutional hierarchies. Statements that true Buddhism in the future is to be found in the West (Deshimaru 1979, xxviii) naturally have only limited effect on institutional Zen. On the other hand, some years ago it was also blasphemous to think of Americans or Mongolians winning *sumō* tournaments in Japan.

A final category of foreigners related to Zen is the field of mission and religious dialogue. Quite a few Western Christian priests, students, and missionaries have practiced Zen, or been in dialogue with Zen individuals or institutions. I mentioned before Seimeizan as an excel-

lent example of this. Another is the NCC Center for the Study of Japanese Religion. This center also is actively engaged in interreligious dialogue, and its relation to the Zen Buddhist world is, I believe, generally positive. Some Christian priests have been engaged in Zen practice at Zen monasteries, the most famous perhaps being Enomiya Lassalle (1898–1990), who even received recognition of being a Zen master at the aforementioned Sanbōkyōdan.[56] Suzuki, Hisamatsu, Akizuki, Abe, Nishitani, and Nishimura are examples of intellectual Zen individuals having an interest in Christianity, but the Myōshinji sect as an institution has also been engaged in dialogue. For some years an exchange between Rinzai monks and Catholic monks from Europe has been arranged (see *Kōryū hōkoku*), the interreligious goodwill also indicating recent years' internationalization.

2.5 Summary

This chapter investigated the different ideal roles, semantic fields, and socioreligious realities of the individual agents within the Myōshinji institution. These include the monk, nun, priest, priest wife, Zen master, abbot, temple son, *danka, danshinto* ("believer"), user, *kō*-member, foreigner, and different persons within the broader "mixed categories." From a freeze-frame perspective these can all be classified under the conceptual opposites *shukke* and *zaike*, or clerical and lay Buddhism. These relational categories are also empirically legitimate as social facts (inheritance of status and profession) and sometimes essentialized as unchanging ideals to keep separate ("once a *shukke* always a *shukke*"). Hierarchical structures exist as gradations within the categories (titles, ranks, grades, and offices) and as dichotomic pairs (*shukke/zaike*, male/female, institution/noninstitution, believer/nonbeliever, Japanese/foreigner), somehow being arranged correlatively (*shukke* is related to *zaike* as male is related to female, etc.). Expanding the dichotomy into complexity reveals not only the blurred status of some of the agents (e.g., the priest wife, the enlightened lay person, the foreigner) and the significance of domain contextuality (e.g., the priest and his wife

[56] As this sect is definitely more "progressive" (or popular) than the Myōshinji sect, this perhaps indicates more about institutional relationships than about Enomiya-Lassalle. Sanbōkyōdan has had more effect in the West than in Japan: the number of Catholic priests practicing with this sect far exceeds the number of Buddhist priests (Sharf 1995, 435).

balancing between being both a married couple and representatives of an institutional temple family); it also reveals the processual relationships of the clerical (the monk-priest agency as a ritual and institutional process involving both *shukke* and *zaike* aspects) and the lay categories (*zaike* can become *shukke* through *ango-e*, and *shukke*-like as *koji*). Both bounded and graded categories can find legitimacy in (Zen) Buddhist doctrines and institutional tradition. In light of the historical presentation of the last chapter, the difference between *shukke* and *zaike* in modernity has, on the one hand, become less distinct. Monastic renouncing to the majority is only a passage, most priests live as lay family fathers, and the laity has more direct possibilities of practicing as "renouncers in the world." On the other hand, the difference has been expanded; secularizing tendencies, freedom of belief and affiliation, and—though the inheritance system guarantee a certain stability—a monastic career attracting fewer people in fewer temples have also further isolated and marginalized the *shukke* dimension of the clerical career. The paradigmatic symbol of the (Myōshinji) Zen institution being a religion of meditating *shukke* patriarchs is a living image only partly reflected in reality. This, as well as strategies of approaching, identifying, and keeping boundaries between these institutional categories in religious practice will be discussed later. The next chapter on religious space moves from agency to place.

CHAPTER THREE

ZEN RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

3.1 Rituals and Ritualization

Rituals in Buddhism and Buddhist studies have a paradoxical status. They have both been praised and rejected as skillful means, useful but not absolute means of reaching or expressing the truth, the Buddhist tradition "practicing it with its institutional right hand, condemning it with its doctrinal left" (Gómez 1987, 119). Although earlier "Protestant" bias toward textual studies in many text books on Buddhism is still dominant, integrating rituals and religious practice has been one of the positive contributions from the anthropological "turn" in the study of religion and Buddhism. No matter what doctrinal arguments and theoretical considerations are used, it is a fact that rituals are and have always been important in all aspects of Buddhism.

But what is a ritual, and why do people use rituals? Rather than seeing rituals as a specific category of actions, recent years' studies have focused more on the process of ritualization as a kind of cultural practice. Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw thus define ritualization as "the process by which normal, everyday action is endowed with [...] quality and becomes ritual" (1994, 64). Ritualized acts, as opposed to everyday acts, are special in being nonintentional in the very act, and form and purpose are disconnected (ibid. 167). Agents of course may have different kinds and degrees of motivations *to* do something, but *in* ritualized action they have committed themselves to stipulated rules with power extending beyond the individual agent in being "both ontologically and historically prior to the actor's own performance of them" (ibid. 158). "Getting it right" (ibid. 111) is an ideal of committing oneself to what the agents feel to be the true nature of the ritual consisting of a list of apprehensible units, which as individually named actions are seen to be "a separate 'thing,' each with its own essential character" (ibid. 151), elementary and of a "natural kind" (ibid., 153). Such units are later to be incorporated and orchestrated in structures and processes but with the point that not all elements need to be there in order to feel the ritual is conducted correctly. "Wrong," broken,

or scamped acts are thus not excluded as long as the agent commits himself to following the rules and playing the correct game. Although Humphrey and Laidlaw understand ritual to be a graded term in the sense that all actions can become ritualized, they nevertheless distinguish ritualized from nonritualized acts, emphasizing that both types typically coexist within the concrete ritual complex. Play, noise, and breaks may have significance in the overall context (e.g., children playing on the temple ground during a children's assembly) but need not in themselves be part of the ritualized complex, just as instrumental acts (e.g., ordering food for funeral guests) are important but not in themselves ritualized. In the same way, this argument can be used in distinguishing ritualized acts from other kinds of religious practice. Thus religious education and cultivation may include both nonritualized (e.g., a dharma lecture, which *can* be ritualized) and ritualized acts (e.g., sutra chanting or meditation during study assemblies, which in their nature *are* ritualized), just as buying an amulet need not be a ritual in itself, though aspects of using it may be (e.g., placing the amulet in the car or having sutras chanted in front of them).

I understand *ritual* to be a generic term identical to *ritualized action*, the latter concept used when underlining the process of changing the quality of normal actions into ritual. I will treat a *rite* as the smallest unit in a ritual, and, since a "ritual never exists alone" (Bell 1997, 171), a series of related rituals within the same context as a (religious) *ceremony*. A (religious) *festival* I will see as a series of larger ritual configurations, lasting a whole day or longer and often being less formal and structured than the ceremony. Rituals somehow related across time and space (e.g., rituals marking birth, adulthood, marriage, and death) I will call *ritual complexes*. *Religious practice* I see as a superordinate category including the different subcategories but also activity that is not ritualized as such (e.g., religious education).

Since ritualized actions are characteristic in being nonintentional, it also follows that they are not inherently meaningful. This does not mean that rituals are meaningless, only that meaning is an *apprehensible* aspect of the large reservoir of possible meaning ascriptions, and that "the ritual form, to say the least, adds something to the substance of ritual" (Rappaport 1999, 31). Several degrees of belief, meaning, and devotion are part of a "series of possible ways of responding to the apprehensibility of ritual acts" (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1995, 213), with "meaning to mean it" being the culmination in experiencing the relation between agent and the archetypal act. It is important to stress

that such experiences are not necessarily limited to an exegetical or semantic nature but may be compressed and multivalent psychosomatic experiences triggering nonreligious associations and feelings. Ritual can thus be secular or religious, with more or less ascribed or experienced meaning, whereas texts, doctrines, and religious or cultural ideas can be integrated within the individual agents as more or less semantically transmitted "objective" meaning.[1] Without a "theologistic bias" in assuming that "the religious representations of a given group, 'culture' or 'society' constitute an integrated and consistent set of abstract principles" (Boyer 1994, 40), ritual can be seen as a means of carrying both semantic layers of certain ideas, values, and practices as well as expressing and legitimating power relations in a religious community. Although Protestant readings of rituals as having merely symbolic and communicative value are important, "Catholic" mastery of ritual technique "not as a means to an end but an end in itself" (Bielefeldt 2005, 239) should not be ignored: "Ritual retains its magical power to alter the world through the modification of metalinguistic framing cues whether one is an illiterate peasant making an offering before a simple stone Buddha, an ascetic engaged in a complex monastic invocation procedure, or an enlightened Chan master ascending the dharma seat" (Sharf 2005, 268–69).

Myōshinji categories and classifying as religious practice

Considerations on the multivocal levels of theoretical concepts are reflected in the multivocal and ambiguous terms and meanings of Japanese Buddhism and the Myōshinji sect.

In the Religious Corporation Law and in the sect constitution (*Shūsei*) the main aims of the institution and each temple are defined as taking care of doctrine (教義 *kyōgi*), rituals (儀式 *gishiki*), and religious education (教化 *kyōka*). In the constitution, ritual practice (*gishiki gyōji*) is not really defined, but later specifically treated as *hōyō* (法要). *Hōyō* (or *hōji, hōshiki*) is a "Buddhist service," classified as a memorial service—i.e., yearly memorial services (*nenki hōyō*) dedicated to the Buddhas, the patriarchs, and the adherent's ancestors with the aim of promoting the sect principles and expressing gratitude. Such different rituals as

[1] Jane Bachnik (1995), in distinguishing subjective and objective (109), semantic and pragmatic meaning (110), suggests some of the "core meanings" of a ritual to be sets of social relations, rather than belief systems (114–15).

ritually marking the periodical changes of the monastic life (*shisetsu jōdō*), celebrating the Buddha's birthday, enlightenment, and death (*sanbutsu-e*), honoring the emperor (*shukushin*), or confessing one's "sins" (*senbō*) are thus all treated as *hōyō* (memorial services) but also as religious education and institutional promotion. In a guidebook for priests (*Jūshoku oboegaki*), rituals (儀礼 *girei*) are subdivided into ritual classes, some of which are also treated under the category of religious education (e.g., yearly and specific rituals), while social activities (社会活動 *shakai katsudō*), in other materials a subdivision of religious education, are treated separately.

This seeming inconsistency is evident when comparing the classifications of other publications as well, where religious practices are ordered after parameters of time, place, or function. Sometimes elements categorized as ritual (*gishiki*) are treated in chapters on education and vice versa, concepts are sometimes treated as practices, or rituals are treated as ritual objects (e.g., copying sutras as a "thing").

The context of representing classifications naturally defines their content. The monthly magazine for priests, *Shōbōrin*, does not categorically distinguish between ritual and secular institutional events when announcing its monthly calendar of activities, publications for lay people do not include purely monastic practice (e.g., *shukushin*, the monthly ritual of honoring the emperor), and local rituals have no relevance to other temples or regions. That there is a discrepancy in determining the exact nature of (who to be commemorated at) the ritual complex *niso sanbukki* is of importance to only theoretically minded priests, and of only limited interest to most adherents.[2]

Describing and classifying is also controlling, and thus in itself a kind of religious practice. All materials are from the headquarters, which has an interest in reaching more or less well defined aims. Although religious education is only itself a subcategory, in some contexts it also has the overall role of a superordinate category including all subaspects; a discourse and practice of ordering the attitudes and actions of the

[2] The *niso sanbutsuki* is the commemoration ceremony of the two patriarchs and the birth, enlightenment, and death of Śākyamuni Buddha. In some materials these are identified as Daruma and Hyakujō (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 4, 62), in others as Daruma and Kaisan (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 52), and one explains the ambiguity by referring to the fact that the Chinese celebration of the two founders as Daruma and Hyakujō in Japan most often has changed to celebrating Rinzai (Linji) or Daruma and Rinzai or Kaisan (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 177).

members, whether lay or clerical. Classifying and defining the contents of the aim and "meaning" of the institution, naturally, is as much a normative *pre*scription, a model *for*, as it is a *de*scription, a model *of*, the religious community. What is presented as pure knowledge also has a social and institutional role. This explains why some religious practices are highlighted as paradigmatic (e.g., *zazen*) or simply pragmatically important (e.g., funerals and memorials)—and why some practices sometimes are even given a separate category. Having an interest in defining and controlling ideas, rituals, and agents also is behind promoting correlation between attitude and practice (e.g., belief and ritual), behind distinguishing between Buddhist and non-Buddhist (and Zen and non-Zen) rituals, and behind excluding "false" religious practices and ideas, obviously practiced and thought also by Zen Buddhists (e.g., *riyaku*). Most often these distinctions are not segregatively valorizing or normatively judging, unless they serve to highlight specific (Zen) Buddhist points, or, as the many yearly rituals of non-Buddhist origin, they are interpreted and promoted as such, especially within the context of religious education. Ritual practices classified as "folk" (*minzoku*) or relics "from old times" (*kōrai gyōji*, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 89)—such as *ennichi*, *kō*, and pilgrimage—are also considered to be local or indigenous beliefs and practices taken over by and united with the Buddhist tradition (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 210).

Categories of religious practice

Pragmatically structuring the plurality of religious practice, three aspects often used in the Myōshinji texts will serve as main categories in the following analyses of religious practice: doctrine, education, and rituals.

Doctrine (*kyōgi*) in its extended sense includes both abstract philosophies as well as common ideas and values used and understood by the clergy and the laity, used in practice by individual agents, or treated normatively in the Myōshinji publications. Some concepts overlap (e.g., *anjin* and satori), and others are not clearly distinguished as acts or agents (e.g., *kudoku*), as subjective qualities or underlying powers or mechanisms (e.g., karma). For purely pragmatic reasons I have subdivided the concepts into two groups. The first consists of the objects of belief and religious action, including both superhuman beings, transempirical powers, ideal mental states or what I call "cultural values." The latter are not specifically Buddhist, but are used and interpreted in the framework of Zen Buddhist ideology and practice and function

as what Sherry Ortner calls cultural schemas, "organized schemas for enacting (culturally typical) relations and situations" (1989, 60). Concepts related to subjective qualities and practices include discussions of the active responses to these objects, the belief and commitment and the form and structure of ritualization presupposed ideally to embody (or reject) certain values, states, or entities. It should be stressed that the order of discussing these elements does not assume any hierarchical or "chronological" priority (as if ideas were prior or superior to or essentially different from subjective engagement).

Religious education or "cultivation" (教化 *kyōka*) is an important and multilayered concept and category. It is the institutional *context* of promoting and enacting ritualization as a strategic *ideal* through different media as well as a concept covering ritual and religious practice itself. It includes nonritualized religious practice such as studying, lecturing, playing and ritualized action such as mediation, taking the precepts, reciting sutras. Education and cultivation includes activities of bodily and intellectual training, social gatherings, and mental cultivation (*shūyō*). *Kyōka* is thus both seen as an ideal *process* and as ritual *events,* also for lay individuals choosing a religious commitment and development above mere "tradition."

Ritualized activities are divided in monastic and lay practices. Both classes are primarily based on time as a taxonomic variable, itself being an institutional construction transcending individual and "natural" time. I distinguish monastic ritualization as a general mode of training and educating the monks from rites of passage as ritualized events displaying and instituting the status and semantics of the clerical agents. Lay rituals focus on daily, periodical and life-cycle rituals. The daily service of worship in the temple or at home is both an independent ritual activity as well as an integral part of what I call calendrical rituals and rites of passage. Calendrical rituals correspond to *nenjū gyōji* (年中行事 meaning "yearly rituals," including seasonal/natural, cultural, and sectarian cyclical events. Rites of passage (通過儀礼 *tsūka girei*) somehow corresponds to "special rituals" (特別行事 *tokubetsu gyōji*), occasions in one's life considered to be, as one handbook for priests says, "turning points in one's life" (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212). They are, in Roy Rappaport's words (1999, 86), digitalized representations of analogical processes bringing clarity and order to both individual agents and the institution. A ritual occasion such as *obon* will naturally fit both of these categories, being a rite of passage for the individual dying and for the family descendants actively helping in the performative process of turning the dead into

proper ancestors, as well as being a reversible and circular ritual to the community and to those without recent deaths in the family. I have treated *obon* as a calendrical ritual, rituals related to death as rites of passage, and "ancestor worship" as daily rituals.

Apart from rituals framed by variables in time I found it necessary also to include other categories of rituals.[3] These are in principle also reversible and part of other rituals, and focus on specific practices or phenomena, namely *zazen* and texts. Whereas the first might be natural to include as a specific category, the latter is an entirely constructed category, discussing the way texts are used and understood as religious practice. Also, I include a special class of local festivals. These are calendrical but outside of the "official" ritual calendar of the institution. Since all ritualized activities are also occurrences at which religious education is ideally promoted, normative institutional interpretations will naturally also be included in the general analyses of the individual rituals.

3.2 Zen Ideas and Practice

"I don't really know," she smiles, showing a facial expression of light embarrassment. It might not really have mattered, but my questioning to whom she was making offerings does seem to trigger some kind of feeling that makes me suspect she can not give an answer. She is inside a Zen temple, bowing in front of a Buddhist statue whose identity I am sure is known only to specialists being keen on technical details. The woman, a *danka* in her mid forties, smiles again and asks me to talk to the priest, who will know such things.

Sixty-eight-year-old Hayashi Toshiaki is also a Myōshinji *danka*. He occasionally visits the graveyard in one of the subtemples within the main temple in Kyoto. He comes alone. His wife being a Jōdō Shinshū *danka* has another grave to visit and take care of, so he comes alone to meet his ancestors' spirits (*tamashii*) returning during *obon*. Does he really believes in them? "No, not really. It is a matter of feeling," he says, pointing toward his heart. "When I come here, so many things

[3] Although Chan monks were earlier known to have been exorcists (Faure 1987), amulets are often bought (also at Zen temples) to protect in times of crises, meditation is also used in situations of stress, and one of the priest's functions is *also* pastoral care in times of social or psychological conflict, I find no reason to suggest a special category for "crises rituals."

from my life come to my mind. But I don't really think I am a serious Buddhist," he laughs.

"What matters is truth (*makoto*), not religious sect (*shūha*)." an elderly woman hearing our conversation intervenes. "I was a Sōtō sect *danka*, but since my husband's family belongs to the Jōdō Shinshū, I have changed affiliation. I don't know much about Buddhism, but I had a religious experience when I was a small girl. The sun suddenly appeared in front of me, while I was walking in the street. This deep experience has followed me ever since."

"Zen is a religion of practice (*shūyō*) and enlightenment, and *zazen* is a spiritual practice (*seishin shūyō*)," the president of Hanazonokai told me. "Zen is not religion, at least not traditional religion. It is a matter of the mind and the spirit."

Zen Buddhism is a tradition containing all sorts of ideas and practices since many different kinds of people with different interests use and understand the living world of the religion. They are all Buddhists, though they might not meditate, speculate, take refuge, believe, or be related to a specific temple as a *danka*. A Japanese "Zen Buddhist worldview" comprises many often divergent concepts and ideas that might not mean the same to all participants but are, nevertheless, part of the Zen Buddhist universe and also related to religious practice. For pragmatic reasons I have categorized such concepts in "objects of belief" and "subjective qualities," each with their own sub categories.

3.2.1 *Objects of belief and religious practice*

Superhuman agency, powers, and ideal states

Zen Buddhist discourse and theology has a long tradition of affirming, negating, inverting, humanizing, and demythologizing metaphysics. The character of and degree to which objects of belief are "real" trans-empirical entities and powers outside of oneself, or metaphorical *upāya* means to describe ideas or reach inner states, have also been treated in subtle discussions of Buddhist philosophy. Representations of ideal states and superhuman powers are closely related to the agents and their religious practice as ontological being is related to epistemological processes. Rituals often function as generative frames of also defining ontological essence: cosmic powers are not necessarily believed to be "out there," but occurring when the context is right and ripe (just as many are "turning to the gods in times of trouble," Reader 1991, 1).

Institutional hermeneutics necessarily balance between different layers of representations. It has to correspond to propagating a certain teaching and religious practice within limited frames according to what it defines as tradition, and yet it has to accept a broad and flexible reservoir of meaning put into it.

The official doctrines (*kyōgi*) or "essence of the sect" (*shūshi*) is stated in the constitution:

> The doctrine and essence of the sect is based on Shakason's [Śākyamuni Buddha's] teaching of the wondrous nirvana-mind of the treasury of the true dharma-eye, the teaching of formless form and the subtle dharma-gate, direct transmission through master Linji and the founder of our sect, the great master Musō, according to which the founder of our temple dharma king Hanazono´s imperial will complies in spreading the true dharma, cultivating the people, and contributing to world peace and culture (*Shūsei*, 3).

Elsewhere the content of belief (*shinkō naiyō*) is defined as the fundamental ideas (*kihonteki rinen*) and the teachings of the sect (*shūjō*, or *oshie, Jūshokugaku kōza*, 107). These focus on belief in key Mahayana ideas such as one's inner Buddha nature and the idea that all sentient beings originally are Buddha (e.g., ibid. 166). Belief is also said not to be a belief in other beings (*zettaisha*, e.g., *kami*), but in one's own spiritual enlightenment (霊性的自覚 *reiseiteki jikaku*).[4] It is a belief in a true human self not deluded by but being beyond ignorance, suffering and ego, this original self being a no-thing (無一物, *mu ichi motsu, Hanazono* 1998, Dec. 23), having a transcendent self (no-self, 無我 *muga*, or no-mind, 無心 *mushin*) beyond the empirical self.[5] The Zen anthropological ideal has often been explained to be identifying the transcendental self with the empirical ego and the Buddha nature with one's personal identity, an ideal also having found expressions in deification of (Chan/Zen) Buddhist masters. Anthropology is thus a natural part of soteriological ideals, and as it is often stated, there are no doctrines without practice (*Zau*, 71). Soteriology in this sense is not a salvation by the help of other-worldly beings, by another power (他力 *tariki*), but by and through the power of oneself (自力 *jiriki*). In a general sense, one could say that the subject is to achieve and recognize

---

[4] E.g., *Josei no bukkyō* 3, 124, quoting D. T. Suzuki.

[5] One book describes the true self (and thus the Buddha nature) as being at the bottom of and transcending the "small" self (*Josei no bukkyō* 3, 127).

the existence of an already existing base on which all living beings are living from. There is, however, a necessary progression related to the status of the individual in which the ideal agent is to progress on the way. Traditional Buddhist methods (*hōhō*) and ideas (e.g., the Fourfold Noble Truths and the six *paramita*) are explained in different sources, and in one guidebook for priests the way is described as a spiritual progress from instinct to moral to religion, that is, Buddhism (*Zau*, 75–77), or from nature to culture, and ending in transcending both. Also, while describing the Buddha way as an ideal for the individual, most often it is combined with ideals of benefiting others: other people, society at large, and eventually the world. Making society into a flower garden (*hanazono*) is an ideal for both cultivation (*kyōka*) and a general ideal outcome of the Buddhist soteriological process (求道 *gudō*), meaning practice in order to achieve salvation.[6]

Nirvana as the final goal is mostly described in relation to Indian Buddhism. Instead of focusing on the negative aspect of "extinction," the positive Japanese concept of satori is used in most materials. Satori (悟り) means "enlightenment," with the verb *satoru* meaning "to enlighten," often used interchangeably with *mezame/mezameru* (目覚める) awakening/to wake up, or *jikaku/jikaku suru* (same characters), to enlighten oneself/to become self-conscious (as opposed to *takaku* 他覚, to enlighten others). Satori is sometimes identified not only with the experience, but with truth itself.[7]

It has been suggested that Japanese religion is characterized by its "natural affirmation" (Matsunaga 1967), and that Buddhism in Japan very seldom has stressed the aspect of extinguishing or transcending this-worldly aspects. As a Mahayana school, Zen emphasizes the "com-

---

[6] See, for instance, *Josei no bukkyō* 3, 152–54. The ideal is "to elevate oneself by aiming at the attainment of enlightenment," but also "to save sentient beings from suffering" (*Jūshoku biyō*, 85). In *Kenshū no shiori* (25) 心の花を咲かせ is identified with 仏心に目覚め, and 家庭、社会を平安で住いよい is identified with 心の花園.

[7] E.g., *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 166 where satori is written with the characters for truth (真理 *shinri*). Hori (1994, 34n) refers to an old Rinzai Zen master who says that satori is a concept that became popular in the monasteries after World War II because of the influence of Suzuki and Nishida—the standard word for Zen enlightenment before that being *taikoku*, "bodily attainment." Also Sharf (1993, 21) suggests that Japanese terms for (religious) experience (e.g., *keiken* and *taiken*) were introduced through Western influence (Otto, James, Schleiermacher) by Nishida and Suzuki. See also Kirchner´s critique of him for not understating the importance of experience and satori in Zen monasteries (1996), Mohr's discussion of "experience" in Zen Buddhism (1993), and Borup (1998, 65–67) for an interview with a *rōshi* on these matters.

ing back" to this world, the waking up to an already existing existence, and the process of going toward (or backward, inward) something positive. In Chan/Zen history different related metaphors have stressed this aspect: seeing one's own nature (見性 *kenshō*), the mirror reflecting the inner self, the light lightening up to find the way and be passed on to others, the flower blooming in the midst of even muddy waters.[8]

In a survey aimed at laypersons at three different ritual occasions (at the Myōshinji main temple complex) I had respondents examine a list of words and hierarchically number them according to what they felt to be most "Zen-like." Although not as highly valued as the more institutionally sanctioned concept *zazen* (see 205 ff), satori was clearly a concept agreed upon by many to be "real Zen."[9] Although few people might actually have more or less consistent ideas of its doctrinal content and context, in general I find that most Japanese will automatically correlate satori and Zen. But, interestingly, the word satori is very seldom used as an attribute of living masters. Nishimura claims that "ninety-nine percent of all Zen priests do not have a real satori experience" (1974, 12), and one priest once told me that "satori is a dirty word" not to be talked about. Satori as a goal for personal achievement might, as the rōshi at the Empukuji monastery illustrated to me, serve in the same way as the thought of winning a gold medal in the Olympic Games: it is impossible for the absolute majority, but a positive ideal to strive for. His idea that Śākyamuni Buddha was a perfect human being achieving the highest goal not being accessible for most other people, is one I have often heard in other Buddhist countries. As such, satori is a "linguistic taboo" (Faure 1991, 49), functioning both to sanction against inflated ego awareness and to justify what Spiro in another context calls the guilt of the "nonnibbanic motivation for their Buddhist practice" (1982, 78), thus bridging the aforementioned dilemma of the priest having to balance between being too "religious"

[8] This, of course, is a general Mahayana metaphor of the Bodhisattva rising up from the suffering world to save all beings, as the lotus flower rises up in its own beauty in muddy waters. The ideal of honoring the cherry blossom for its sudden bloom and decay is also parallelled by the "natural affirmation," the joy and appreciation of even transient beauty. On these metaphors in Chinese Chan context, see McRae 1986, 132–47. Yamada Mumon called Zen a "mirror-religion" (I have not been able to find references for this).

[9] 24.3% of the *sesshin* participants valued satori to be the most Zen-like concept, 78.3% placing it among the three most Zen-like concepts. Comparable figures among the participants in the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai* were 16.7% and 62.5%, and among Musō Kyōkai participants, 9.8% and 39.1%.

and too "secular." Just as enlightenment stories of legendary masters (and Western converts) follow standardized discursive structures, the concept seems primarily to function as a doctrinal ideal, a ritually enacted model *of* and *for* "practical mastery of Buddhahood" (Sharf 2005, 266), and an institutional emblem to legitimate transmission. Satori is an honorific attribute ascribed to deceased masters and to the few living masters who are institutionally sanctified on ritual occasions at which their seals of transmission (and thus status as enlightened masters) are revealed.[10]

Contrary to most other Japanese Buddhist sects, there is no clearly defined principal image (本尊 *honzon*) of the Zen sects. Śākyamuni Buddha is, however, often suggested to be the main figure to enshrine in temples and Buddha altars. He is the originator of Buddhism, which is why Zen Buddhism (and thus Myōshinji), in placing him in the top of the celestial hierarchy, also sees itself as representing the most original form of Buddhism. In spite of such an ideal, certainly not all temples have Śākyamuni enshrined as, and many adherents do not even know him to be, the main deity.[11] He is most often described as (merely) a human being, a person discovering the way for other human beings to follow. Whether he, other Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and patriarchs are "actually" considered to be merely dead or still living or active powers is a complex question.[12] Certainly some educated monks treat it as "merely symbolic" when making offerings to the spirits, while the way others treat Śākyamuni in religious practice leaves me no doubt that he is on the same ontological footing as gods and other celestial beings. Contrary to the latter, however, Śākyamuni, ancestors and deceased patriarchs are both conceived as historical and legendary persons—and as such they are mostly represented in publications from the Myōshinji sect—dead and yet somehow still living, personal and yet part of an

---

[10] See also Wright (1992) on the relationship between awakening, kinship, and historical understanding in Chinese Chan Buddhism.

[11] Within the Sōtō sect, 47.5% of the temples have Śākyamuni as its main deity, 22.6% have Kannon (SSSMC, 1995, 111). 76.3% of the adherents did *not* know Śākyamuni to be the main deity (SSSMC, 1993, 115). I have no figures from any Rinzai sects, but do not suspect these to be any different.

[12] "Practicing Buddhists are able to maintain at once that the Buddha is present in such things as relics, sculptures, and paintings, and at the same time able to hold the conflicting (and seemingly contradictory) view that it is only the emblem, or reminder, of the no-longer-present Buddha that they worship. And, what is more, they use sculptural images as a means of reflecting on the tensions between these two simultaneously held positions" (Kinnard 1999, 11). On the sacralization of patriarchs, see Faure (1991, 96–178) and Sharf (1992).

amorphous power field. In Chan and Zen, mythology might have been replaced by hagiography (Faure 1993, 171), but not necessarily by a totally demythologized worldview.

In the broad hermeneutical frames of what Faure (1991, 40) calls "inclusive" Chan (being a two-tiered, dialectical discourse) such identifications are justified. Treating what some might consider to be real celestial entities as symbolic manifestations and as means to own cultivation is a general hermeneutical strategy in the Myōshinji materials, as are the attempts to existentialize and spiritualize other other-worldly ideas and objects. As a book for priests says, since Zen reveres no particular texts or images, the only *honzon* is our own Buddha nature (仏性 *busshō*) or Buddha mind (仏心 *busshin*), all other representations being skillful means (*hōben*) with which to cultivate ourselves (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 62). This inclusive strategy both tends toward unification—everything is, from a higher standpoint, emptiness or Buddha nature—and yet also presupposes a stratified structure in which different truth-claims are put in order. Those striving to achieve satori often do not believe in superhuman beings, or they take them to be symbolic representations, and those who do believe in Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as real living entities often do not believe in the possibility of achieving satori. The reverse pedagogics of other-worldly powers to manifest themselves according to stratified this-worldly agency (the idea of *upāya*, J. 方便 *hōben*) is also part of inclusive Zen. In a guidebook for Rinzai Zen Buddhist priests it is explained how the different appearances of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are structurally related to the differences in human personalities and different ways of suffering (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 257).

Inclusive Zen is, however, only one part of the total picture of Zen hermeneutics. The other aspect is "exclusive" Zen, which "implies a negation of conventional truth from the standpoint of ultimate truth: it emphasizes the ineffable, nonrepresentational, nonsensational, nonfactual nature of awakening" (Faure 1991, 39). This "explicit" differentiation between true Zen and non-Zen has been overemphasized in Western orientalist assumptions but also consciously used as symbolic expressions of institutional and religious power that seem to also have been accepted among laypersons as a complementary ideal version to the "implicit" hermeneutical model.[13] At another level it is also a

[13] E.g., although Shinto gates and figures of Shinto gods do appear also in Zen temples, Zen is seldom associated with such manifestations. See, however, Bodiford's account on how Zen masters ordained Shinto gods and spirits (1993, 173–79). Chinese

hermeneutical process practiced in monastic life, where kōan practice aims at the ritual unmasking of apparent truths: the symbolic representation is not identical to the represented. The whole epistemological process of acknowledging this is as important as the reverse (and complementary) process with a perceiving no-mind of actually identifying ontological emptiness with "fullness,"[14] This attitude is also expressed throughout materials from the institution, as for instance when a missionary priest (*fukyōshi*) defines belief in one's own Buddha nature to be true belief, and the common belief in and reliance upon other mysterious objects (*shinpiteki na taishō*) to be superstition (*meishin*, *Hanazono* 1995 July, 26).

Pejoratives are also used about other concepts and practices considered to be "folk," superstition or products of egoistic intentions. The idea of a soul (霊魂 *reikon*), or spirit (精神 *seishin*) continuing its existence after the physical death of the body, being able to curse living beings, on the one hand is accepted as a common "folk idea" (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 262).[15] Or, it is indirectly brushed aside as unfixed ideas within Buddhism (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 4, 144), explained as one's own projections (*Zen Q & A*, 120) or of less importance than understanding how to live a life striving for settling the mind (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 262). Death, soul, and afterlife are delicate matters to deal with for Japanese Buddhists—and I will return to this later. But it is quite suggestive for the balancing between "inclusive" and "exclusive" Zen that what is emphasized as critical ideas to be taken up through missionary efforts (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 12) in some texts are accepted, or just presupposed, in others (e.g., a pamphlet on *shōryōtana* affirms that there is a spirit after death).

Another idea often ignored as non-Buddhist is *genze riyaku*, "this-worldly benefits." *Genze riyaku* (現世利益) is a common term for material

---

Chan monks converting local deities was also part of Buddhist practice (Faure 1993, 157).

[14] This penetration and unbinding of apparent meaning is the ideal behind mastering kōan "to the effect that one will never again be tricked or sucked in by the words of the patriarchs, which is to say, by the koan genre itself" (Heine and Wright 2000, 41). The ideal Tibetan Buddhist process of dying also includes the possibilities of the dying to recognize external entities as his own projections, thus reaching salvation. In another, perhaps more dramatic, context it is also structurally identical to the Hopi ritual of unmasking *kachina* gods for children, who start their religious career by having the identities revealed as being merely human.

[15] According to a general survey on Japanese religiosity, 39% claim to believe in reincarnation, 34% in life after death, and 59% in a human spirit or soul (Kisala 1999, 69).

or spiritual benefits received as what is sometimes referred to as *myōri* (冥利, "divine favor") or even *reigen* (霊験, "miracle"), manifestations of those other-worldly powers with which one is in a relation of exchange. Ian Reader and George Tanabe (1998) argue for the fact that *genze riyaku*, if anything, is the common denominator for Japanese religion. Although often accused of being wrong religion (*jakyō*), quasi-religion (*ruiji shūkyō*), new fad religion (*shinkō shūkyō*), or folk belief degenerated from original spiritual benefits (ibid. 3), *genze riyaku* is also an important aspect of religious practice within the traditional (*kisei*) religions. This-worldly benefits have always been part of Mahayana Buddhism and even explained and justified in the sutras, especially in the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Flower Garland Sutra*, but also implicit in early Indian Buddhism (ibid. 8–13 and 73–82).

Genze riyaku is often rejected as opposed to true Zen. In the abovementioned survey responses were clear: the absolute majority placed *riyaku* at the bottom of the scale.[16] The same attitude I have also heard from Zen priests I have talked to: *riyaku* is not Zen. In the written materials from the institution it is also negated in different ways. It is acknowledged to be represented in local temples—and Kannon in particular is described as the Bodhisattva of *genze riyaku* (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 64)—but not related to the true educational practices of the Zen sect (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 207), and although there might be many people supporting (the idea of) *genze riyaku*, it has no relation to Zen (ibid. 208). Although it is said that *riyaku* are the gifts from the gods and Buddhas, and that the merit earned from praying may result in benefits such as wealth and health (ibid. 261) "it cannot be said that living a life pursuing *genze riyaku* is a true way of life for a Buddhist" (ibid. 262). This-worldly benefits are often considered to express "lower" religion, focusing on oneself, the here and now, on material benefits as opposed to "higher religion" (both of these terms are mine) focusing on others (e.g., *Hanazono* 1995 July, 24 and *Zen Q & A*, 106), on spiritual benefits, on salvation and happiness (*kōfuku*). Thus, contrary to satori as an ideal for the elitarian

[16] None of the respondents thought *riyaku* to be either most or second-most "Zen-like," with most—87.9% (*sesshin*), 95.8% (*zazenkai*), and 90.3% (Musō Kyōkai)—giving them the two lowest values, or not ascribing them any value at all. Shinshū is even more restrictive in officially rejecting *genze riyaku* (Reader and Tanabe 1998, 134–36), though "many Shinshū believers ignore their denomination's orthodox rejection of magic and superstition" (Tanabe 2004, 290).

minority not achieved and not talked about, *genze riyaku* is a tabooed concept talked about and condemned, but practiced by the majority.

Benefits from communicating with the other world is not, however, altogether negated as wrong practice (or belief), and both the ontological essence and moral judgment of the concept depend on context and intention. Reader and Tanabe distinguish between two main types of benefits, which include other concepts and practices that are also dealt with in the Myōshinji materials and which the Zen Buddhist agents are also familiar with: "benefits that relate to protection from external dangers"—*yakuyoke* (厄除け), prevention of danger—and "benefits that are directly beckoned through actions designed to induce good fortune"—*kaiun* (開運), the opening up for good fortune (1998, 45–46). The former includes preventative amulets (*omamori*), which are "sacralized by religious rituals that transform them into *bunshin* (spiritual offshoots) or *kesshin* (manifestations) of the deity" (ibid. 46), and *migawari* ("changing or substituting one's body," ibid.), amulets or statues absorbing the ill fortune of the person owning the amulet, or touching the statue. The latter, *kaiun*, Reader and Tanabe later complement with another type, *kōun*. *Kōun* (幸運) is "good luck understood as a lucky break that just happens without any cause or deliberate effort," while *kaiun* is actively bringing or making good luck, or simply, as it requires moral and/or ritual effort, "moral luck" (ibid. 110). The point of bringing the coincidental luck into the realm of controllable, or at least manipulative luck—to transform chance (*kōun*) into destiny (*kaiun*)—is what the tactics of practical benefits attempt to achieve through ritual (ibid.).

This is also the legitimacy of a significant part of the priestly responsibilities of religious practice. Transforming chance into destiny, meaninglessness into meaningfulness, inconceivable into conceivable, is the ideal work and responsibility of all religious institutions. While thus taking care of acting out one side of the ever ongoing process of exchanging and manipulating cosmic (and institutional) powers, it is up to the other part—the (lay) agents—to fulfill the ritual and institutional spectrum. The cosmic powers need to be triggered by human effort, and turning luck into destiny requires contact to, and to a certain extent control of, potential positive powers that would otherwise be either chaotic or regarded as nonexistent.

Although the publications from the institution pay much more attention to giving advice on existential and spiritual questions on the Buddhist path, some texts addressed to lay members do address such

questions. One such example is *Zen Q & A* (152–53), where several occasions and events at which Buddhist *kauin* are "available" are listed and explained: *obon*, pilgrimage, copying sutras, and *ennichi*, the holy day of a deity. On the other hand, a fairly encyclopedic explanation in a Q & A page on the Myōshinji official homepage to the reason why funerals are not held on unfavorable days (友引 *tomobiki*) concludes that we should be careful not to lose sight of the correct objects of belief in favor of folk belief (俗信 *zokushin*, www.myoshin.com/gatten/osousiki-imi-1.htm).

Kudoku, *dōtoku* and *gō* (karma) are all concepts that imply both the merit and virtue achieved by acting, the action itself, and the effects that the action and the merit and virtue of acting generate. They are therefore not only internally interchangeable, but also often treated as identical to *kaiun*. Reader and Tanabe distinguish between *dōtoku* (道徳) as a moral propriety and *kudoku* (功徳) as the virtue of efficacious power, especially that of ritual (1998, 112). "While both work together, ritual power, which accesses the aid of the gods, is more potent than moral virtue" (ibid.). Although they are both important as religious and cultural virtues and qualities, ritual virtue can accomplish what cannot be achieved by moral virtue (ibid.).

Melford Spiro, in one of his books on Burmese Buddhism (1982), suggests that the reason why most Burmese attach more emphasis and value to giving (*dāna*) than to keeping the precepts is because of its measurability. Since "the precepts are formulated negatively—one must refrain from this or that activity—compliance with them is an ambiguous and therefore psychologically unsatisfying method for acquiring merit" (ibid. 103). *Dāna*, on the other hand, "can be quantified—how often, how much, at what cost—and the resultant merit calculated" (ibid. 104). The same can be said in the Japanese context about the difference between moral and ritual virtue and their effects. As will later be discussed, for most people keeping the precepts is not as important as taking them ritually, and certainly not as important and necessary as conducting memorial ceremonies for the ancestors.

In different materials from the institution, ritual actions with which to achieve *kudoku* are mentioned (e.g., *zazen*, donations, sutra chanting; *Shingyō kyōten*, 97). *Kudoku* is often mentioned in relation to the transferring of merit (*ekō*) to other living beings—primarily all of one's ancestors, which is also why certain ritual times are more obvious for accumulating and transferring merit (e.g., at *obon*) than others. Whether

transfer of merit harmonizes with (individual) karma causality or not has often been discussed in Buddhist history,[17] but particularly in East Asian cultures Buddhism probably would not have succeeded in spreading to all spheres of society had it not been for this mechanism. An important aspect of *kudoku* is its capacity to increase by itself, depending on ritual action and intention. Thus, doing a ritual favor for another both accumulates merits to oneself and to the other receiver whom one wants to transfer it to. This double-sided action is thus cost- and investment-free; the producer and transmitter of merit is also the receiver of it. The structure of the power exchange depends on agent, action, receiver, cosmic power, and intention, which is why the mutual interdependency of *kudoku* and *dōtoku* is emphasized by the institution that sees an important point in linking them. By making ritual actions into moral actions as well, they change value. If, for instance, a ritual action is done altruistically and with a no-mind, the "result" of one's wishes are approved of as true deeds (ibid. 31–32). Nonegoistic and noninstrumental actions (e.g., *intoku*, "secret acts of charity") or even unconscious and "natural' good deeds without focusing on personal benefit are thus not considered to be *genze riyaku*, but are expressions of the more correct exchange of *kudoku* and *dōtoku* (e.g., *Shingyō kyōten*, 157). Bodhidharma's rejection of *kudoku* does not only indicate difference between a theological discourse and "folk religion," but is also a story often described in the Myōshinji materials (e.g., *Zen Q & A*, 27) as an expression of how religious actions are ideally related also to ethical intention and faith, and—contrary to *genze riyaku*—often involve other-worldly and/or soteriological relations.

That the participants in the abovementioned surveys responded generally more positively in valuing *kudoku*[18] than *genze riyaku* as a typical Zen concept does not necessarily say anything about their "real" motives and beliefs behind ritual actions. It does suggest, however, that they are somehow conscious about its closer relationship to what is considered to be true Zen ideals—a few remarks even (in referring to Bodhidharma) neglecting *kudoku* as having any value at all.

---

[17] See Harvey 1990, 43–44. Both ritual efficacy and the idea of merit-transfer is part of, and justified also by, canonical classic Buddhism. That karma causality in its more or less cogent expressions are more favored, I take to be a matter of medium (written doctrines), rather than description of religious "realities."

[18] 44.6% from the university *sesshin*, 16.6% of the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai*, and 51.2% from the Musō Kyōkai gathering placed *kudoku* within the positive half (the first four numbers) of the scale.

Gō (業) is the Japanese word for karma. It is sometimes interchangeable with *innen* (因縁)—sometimes contracted to *gō-innen*—the cause and conditions behind all manifestations. Often karma implies both the individual action as well as the underlying cosmic mechanism producing karmic effects and consequences in accordance with the moral and ritual actions of the individual actors. Thus it is theoretically interchangeable also with *kudoku*, and *dōtoku*, though *gō* is usually situated in a distinctively Buddhist discursive context where both ethics and ritual practices (e.g., taking and keeping the precepts, joining the fourfold path, striving to practice the *paramita* etc.) are systematized. Due to its much more technical implications and "foreign" origin, *gō*/karma is seldom an idea exposed in general religious practice in Japan, and only incidentally discussed in materials from the Myōshinji institution to lay members. Surprisingly, the idea of karma has not really been incorporated into the religious mentality of all the official and institutional transmitters (the Zen priests of the Myōshinji sect) either. A survey conducted by the Kyōka Sentā in order to measure and change religious attitudes related to the question of karma showed that certainly not all priests thought karma to be a clearly comprehensible, positive, or especially Buddhist concept, nor especially suitable for cultivating the laity.[19]

That the priests themselves are uncertain about understanding and using karma might, it is suggested, be due to circumstances, practices, and "distorted ideas" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 9) resulting from misinterpreting and misusing the concept in a correct Buddhist way. Fatalism, abortion cults (*mizuko kuyō*), and belief in the curses of the spirits of the dead are examples mentioned as such incidences (ibid.); and in particular, aspects concerning human rights and social discrimination have in recent years raised serious problems and caused harsh criticism against all Buddhist sects. Considering karma as a negative notion might point to the fact that Indian ideas of karma as (also) a concept related to reincarnation and soteriology does not correspond to the anthropology and cosmology of most Japanese—a handbook for Hanazonokai members even

[19] The survey was sent to 767 priests, of whom 443 (57.8%) responded. Half of the respondents had a "plus" (positive) image, the other half a "minus" (dark, negative) image of karma, and most guessed that only a few of the *danshinto* would have a positive feeling of the concept (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 19–20). 71% had had a feeling or experience of karma (17), but only 52% thought it conforms to Buddhist doctrines (25). Thus, only 36.6% would use karma for cultivation/mission (*kyōka*) while 60% would not—either by fear of misunderstanding, or because they did not themselves have a clear comprehension of the concept (41).

mentions that we only live once (*Hanazono Q & A*, 2–3). Apart from emphasizing its Mahayana anchorage, propagating filial piety or *kudoku* (rather than karma) and satori (rather than nirvana) might thus also be seen as ways to accommodate the worldview of (the possible majority of) its adherents, and in promoting the image of a "positive religion." The strategy of appearing as an institution capable of "cutting off karma" as a negative power certainly seems to have been successful in especially some of the new (new) religions (e.g., Aum and Agonshū), and one cannot preclude the possibility that such connotations and strategy have also had an impact on the traditional religions and their representation of such important doctrinal concepts.

Cultural ideal values

Distinguishing between religious and nonreligious concepts is naturally problematic, even more so when "cultural values" are used as religious ideals. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney finds religion to be subsumed under a broader cultural framework of self and other (1987, 29), and Timothy Fitzgerald (2000) suggests that the Western notion of religion creates unnecessary dead ends and thus fails to acknowledge the true focus of most Japanese "religiosity" being cultural values, ideologies, social hierarchies, norms, institutions, rituals, etc.

Introductory books on Japanese religion often classify Confucianism as a distinct religion or religious system of thought being mixed up with "indigenous" Japanese ideas and practices. Whether it is justified to speak of different segregated traditions or not, ideals and practices of Chinese and Confucian origin have definitely had great importance in Japanese religion and culture as both objects of belief and frames of practice. Ideals of extended family relations, of harmony and hierarchy, of etiquette and ethics are important cultural as well as Buddhist ideas, and also the Myōshinji sect devotes quite a large amount of energy to promoting these as ideals of the sect, without calling them Confucian ideals or "cultural values." Buddhist notions of no-self, social and cosmological interrelatedness, enlightenment, ethical and ritual behavior would have a different resonance if they were not related to concepts of gratitude (*kansha, okagesama*), receiving favors (*on*) and the repaying of favors (*hō-on*). As is the case with merit and ancestor worship, I doubt that Buddhism would have prospered in East Asian cultures without including values of family relationships. This was also accomplished as a conscious strategy, as Cole (1998) too suggests about medieval China (fourth to tenth century), during which leading Buddhists had success in

propagating Buddhism by reinterpreting traditional Confucian values into Buddhist doctrine and practice.[20] That Chan discourses propagated rejection of familial indebtedness (e.g., Linji encouraging to kill parents, Buddha, and patriarchs) in showing inheritance to be a symbolic murder ("become your own father, become the Buddha—because it does not allow space for two" (Faure 1996, 63) was only possible because of a double rhetoric of prescribing and ritualizing social bonds (e.g., funerals).

On (恩) is the concept used for the gratitude and dept from having received favors or benefits from another in a mutual relationship of exchange in which it is expected that the receiver pays back the received favors or benefits (報恩 *hō-on*). *On/hō-on* are thus relational concepts of both social and psychological importance and exchange patterns used and promoted in cultural and religious frames. The receiver is indebted to the giver as the children are indebted to their parents, the people to their emperor, the employee to his superior.[21] This exchange of favors and/or gifts can be the very basic chains of warm relationships, but it can also be a social and psychological burden, a price to pay, a never-ending dept to carry. Exchange of different *kinds* (material gift-giving, teaching, commitment, etc.)—to which we shall return later—is one way of ritual performing *on/hō-on* relations between different agents of different power. Earlier this reached political dimensions, as when Zen monks and priests were dealing with *shōgun*, emperors and military

[20] Filial piety based on father-son relations was directed toward mother-son relations, identifying the mother as the primary source of the son's well-being. On the one hand it made sons feel indebted to the kindness of their mothers, while on the other hand threatening them with the possibility of their mothers being potential "sinners who would languish in a hell or purgatory after death" (Cole 1998, 2). Repaying the received kindness (*hō-on*) thus also meant paying a ransom to produce merit to counteract the effects of sin. This, of course, was handled by the Buddhist monasteries, which were further supported and patronized due to this ideological and ritual change—which Cole suggests the Buddhist propaganda succeeded in accomplishing. "They succeeded in this project and seem to have convinced family members to look to the Buddhist establishment for solutions to their problems in life" (226). Not only did this effect cosmological changes, but also the female body was apparently remodeled. The mother's upper half (breast, face) was seen as the positive half giving love and nourishment, while the lower, "sexual" half became the negative and sinful part. The upper half was to be repaid by *hō-on* (returning the kindness), the lower half by ransom, by erasing the sin (230–31). See also Hardacre 1984, 134–37 on the circulation in the Meiji period of the text *Saint Mokuren's Journey to Hell*.

[21] In one Mahayana sutra, Meditation on the Mind-base Sutra, four kinds of *on* are defined: toward parents, the emperor, living beings, and the three treasures (e.g., *Zen & A*, 11).

governments, giving way to more or less pejorative terms such as "samurai Zen," "emperor Zen," and later "corporate Zen" (Victoria 1997, 182–91).

The Buddhist doctrines of no-self, interdependency, and chain of existence to a certain extent correlate with such ideas, and in one book it is explained how the character *on* consists of the two separate characters mind/heart (心) and cause (因), meaning "to think deeply about what things consist of, in Buddhist terms, to think deeply about relations (*innen*)" (*Hanazono Q & A*, 139). The same book also states that: "The fact that I live 'now' and 'here' is not because of my own power but thanks to society, nature, and my parents. Speaking in Buddhist terms this is the concentration of relations, I live because of other beings" (ibid. 138). *Innen* (因縁) is most often the technical term for karmic causality and the resulting networks of relations. It is also interchangeable with *en* (縁)—a concept not restricted to Buddhist discourse, meaning the "connections between people and on the interconnectedness of all who exist in the world" (Reader 1991, 48). The opposite is having no relations, *mu-en*, which finds its other-worldly bogey in the concept of *muenbotoke* ("Buddha/deceased without relations"), the poor, wandering spirit who has had his relational bonds cut (see 221).

The positive attitude of having received gratitude and thus being indebted to return it in a circular process of altruistic exchange is an ideal theme with which to describe and promote the teachings and practices of Myōshinji. The "virtue of paying back gratitude" (*hō-on shatoku*) is seen to be a "fundamental [theme] of our sect" (*Josei no bukkyō* 3, 75), and one way of expressing this gratitude is for the *danshinto* to practice the "Article of Life Faith" and the "Words of Pure Faith" (ibid. see XXX), thus giving these socioreligious concepts an existential, or spiritual, relevance. Living a life in gratitude (感謝 *kansha*) and thankfulness (有り難さ *arigatasa*) is living a life of repaying *hō-on* (*Hanazono Q & A*, 139), which in itself is living a happy life (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 3, 29) and an attitude with which "work of no-mind" (無心の働き) becomes "work of enjoyment" (*yorokonde suru shigoto*, ibid. i).[22] Gratitude is not only an ideal motivation behind ritual activity—as when repaying received favors from Buddha and patriarchs by donations—but it is in itself a practice of the Buddhist path. It is a practice in

[22] In one book there is a case story of a person turning decease into a "mind of gratitude" (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 1, 56).

which one benefits oneself and others ("*jiririta no gyō*," *Hanazono* 1996 Nov. 3). No-self is identified with gratitude (お陰 *okage*, e.g., *Hanazono Q & A*, 141), and "the fact that understanding of *okage* comes with the transcendence of the ego is the greatest joy of faith" (ibid.). Gratitude is thus both a religious ideal to be expressed through social and ethical practice (as is the ideal of the Okagesama movement, see 153), and it is an ideal of inner cultivation, a soteriological transformation of social relations.[23]

3.2.2 *Subjective qualities and practices*

Some theoretical remarks on "belief"

Like the concept of religion, "belief" is so much part of Christian terminology and ideology that applying it to other contexts can be rather problematic. Belief as a more or less rationally reflected affirmation of the truth-claims of doctrinal teachings does not necessarily correspond to the Buddhist tradition, which "is filled with recognitions of the limits and even unimportance of understanding" (Reader and Tanabe 1998, 127). That Japanese have "high levels of belonging and low levels of cognitive belief" (Reader 1991, 9) is a fact suitable to most religious cultures, though perhaps to a lesser extent in those focusing more on orthodoxy than orthopraxy.[24]

Instead of rejecting the notion of belief (as some anthropologists seem to prefer), I believe it to be more constructive to redefine and discuss its relevance. In this regard I find Rappaport's distinction between belief and acceptance relevant, being somewhat analogous to Southwold's distinction between "believing that" (belief) and "believing in" (faith) (1983, 151, 156). Rappaport defines belief as a private "mental state concerning, or arising out of, the relationship between the cognitive

---

[23] See Tucker 1999 on the Tokugawa Confucian thinker Kaibara Ekken (1630–1714) who systematized such "social" ideals of self-cultivation.

[24] Though there is a tendency for religious traditions to be either orthodoxic (emphasis on correct belief in doctrines) or orthopraxic (emphasis on correct performances), it "can only be a matter of emphasis, of course, since no religious tradition can promote belief or ritual at the total expense of the other, and many would never distinguish between them at all" (Bell 1997, 191). Commenting upon a Japanese survey in the project "Asian Values Study," Kisala says that the religious situation in Europe and Japan "are remarkably alike in indicating a high level of adherence to cultural custom (religious affiliation in Europe and religious participation in Japan) and a relatively low level of personal allegiance to religion (religious participation in Europe and religious affiliation in Japan)" (1999, 67).

processes of individuals and representations presented to them as possible candidates for the status of true" (1999, 119). Acceptance, on the other hand, is a public (and thus observable) act, a publicly manifested commitment, which—in the context of this project—can be said to be a mutually directed gesture of obligation of both agents and the institution. Belief and acceptance, he points out, do not (necessarily) include each other, but may be mutually influenced. Richard Gombrich coined two kinds of belief: cognitive, what people claim to believe (e.g., ghosts do not exist), and affective, what people actually believe as evidenced by their behavior (e.g., refusing to sleep in a haunted bedroom; 1971, 9).[25] Reader and Tanabe (1998) use the same analytical pair, understanding cognitive belief to be when "intellectual understanding, thought, or knowledge is based on doctrines or teachings" whose content can "be explained and discussed in the mode of theology or its secular counterpart philosophy" (ibid. 129). Affective belief is expressed in terms of faith, trust, or reliance, often accompanied with notions of sincerity. Although these notions are different from Rappaport's, in their structural similarity they point to the relations between inner and outer, ideal and enacted modes of belief in rituals and religious life. Belief is thus neither a static system nor an absolute state of mind, but (most often) a complex contextualized processual disposition and practice. It may be triggered in certain (ritual) contexts or in certain places, just like belief statements are bound by the discursive contexts in which they are expressed. Belief may be permanent or ad hoc, and *may* be more or less in accordance with coherent ideas and theological discourses. What Reader and Tanabe (1998, 128) call the "insurance factor" ("it can't hurt," "maybe it'll work," "why not try") is as representative of Buddhist belief as conviction of *zazen* leading to enlightenment or intellectual reflexive conviction of a dog having Buddha nature. Belief may be compartmentalized in different and/or conflicting domains as different or multivocal internal discourses, modes, or feelings within the same person, even within the same experience—though there might be a certain correspondence between intellectual capacity, social status, and the degree of integration of ideologies and/or belief systems. Belief and meaning are graded and processual terms, mutually

[25] The Japanese term *tatemae* ("shared meanings") and *honne* ("private meanings") somehow are related to this dichotomy, though stressing the difference between individual and society, or inside/outside, and not, as Gombrich points to, a difference between truth or falsehood.

influencing each other or moving from one position to the other. Belief as a mental state or response can be expressed in or shaped by ritual practice in a spectrum of possibilities between the position of belonging/practicing without believing to the position of believing without belonging/practicing. Belief (and other mental states or attitudes) and acceptance/commitment can also to be means of spiritual cultivation and/or instrumental efficacy, and a religious agent can move from non-belief to belief (or vice versa), from affective to cognitive belief (or vice versa), from less to more "meaning to mean" (or vice versa).

Belief, commitment, and "meaning to mean it" in the Myōshinji context

Faith, or belief, has always been part of Buddhism as a cognitive and affective ingredient of practice and doctrinal systems. Faith is the "mother of merit" (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 166), and important as "aspiration for the way [道心 *dōshin*]."[26] "Chanting sutras at a memorial service with *dōshin* is far more agreeable to the Buddha and the patriarchs than *zazen* practice without *dōshin*" (*Zau*, 103–4). As one missionary priest puts it: "Practice without faith cannot be called practice, it is only actions without durability" (*Hanazono* 1995 Jan. 25).

The Japanese word most often translated as belief is *shinkō* (信仰) or *shinpō* with the verb *shinjiru* or *shinzuru*, meaning "to believe." It carries many connotations of related meanings and uses to which the English translations would be faith, belief, devotion, commitment, and religious sentiment. Although the juridically defined guarantee of religious freedom stresses freedom of belief (信仰の自由 *shinkō no jiyū*) as an attitude of belief (信*shin*) in doctrines or teachings (教 *kyō*), belief, or faith, is seldom separated from practice.

Shinkō does have a cognitive pole relating to intellectual understanding, doctrinal insight, and cognitive belief in the values of truth-claims. This kind of belief is mostly an affair of intellectual priests, scholars, and "scholar monks." On the other end of the pole *shinkō* is also close to "religious custom" or "practice." This latter meaning of *shinkō* is the one meant in terms such as *minkan* or *minzoku shinkō* (民族信仰), meaning "folk belief" or "folk practices." In this sense, "*shinkō* as custom, then, are practices habitually carried out within a world-view of myth and magic affirmed through affective belief but not always through cognitive

[26] *Zau*, 103. *Dōshin* means desire for enlightenment, often identical to having a *bodaishin*, the aspiration to enlightenment, the ideal for any Mahayana Buddhist.

belief." Although there are intellectual Buddhists who will insist on the true Buddhism to be of the cognitive type, it seems that belief in the meaning of "custom" and "affection" is the most widespread, and also the most inclusive: you may believe cognitively, but the most important is to believe affectively.

Belief need not have any specific content. It can be a religious sentiment, a feeling and commitment toward the tradition, the institution, and what it represents, or a trust (信頼 *shinrai*) in human relations and one's own Buddha nature (e.g., *Hanazono Q & A*, 137). It can be an "attitude" but also a process and a religious practice. "The shape of the believer's faith within the Rinzai sect is nothing special. Being conscious about and fulfilling one's duty, that in itself is Zen belief" (*Zau*, 162), says a guidebook for priests, stressing the importance of not striving to be or act as something else, but to cultivate the field of what one is or does. It is often stated that belief in one's own Buddha nature or "the mind itself being the Buddha mind" in itself leads to, and is an expression of, being a Buddha (e.g., *Shūmon anjinshō*, 15). Belief as a feeling or attitude to be achieved can be triggered by either learning ritualized correct form, or through the help of the institution, which offers high levels of both cognitive and affective belief. I will return to belief-cultivation in the next chapter, and here just mention two such qualified concepts, *shinjin* and *shōjin*.

Shinjin (信心) is mostly associated with Jōdō Shinshū and its founder Shinran, who replaced religious practice and personal efforts in favor of "purity of faith" in the other power (*tariki*) of Amida Buddha. The idea also plays a significant role in the teachings of the Myōshinji sect, and it was already ratified as an important concept in the first Myōshinji charter (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 5). *Shinjin* is described as a "believing in" or "sincerity of" mind/heart (*Shūmon anjinshō*, 4), as believing in the words of the patriarchs (ibid.). It is expressed in the commitment to the three treasures (帰依 *kie*); purity of belief and taking the refuges are sometimes contracted into one word (*shinjinkie*, ibid. 5). Purity of faith is an attitude that can be deepened by, for instance, reading and understanding sutras (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 1, 2). It implies a long-term process and efficacy and is sometimes distinguished from the "instant benefits" of *genze riyaku* as a more refined practice.

Shōjin (精進) is almost interchangeable with *shinjin*, meaning devotion or diligence. It is one of the eight noble truths and one of the perfections (*paramita*) through which it was said that Śākyamuni Buddha's disciple Ananda was finally enlightened. It is practiced in the monk's

training halls and at *zazenkai*, where devotion is learned in different ways, e.g., by prostrations (*sanpai*) in front of the guardian deity of the *zendō* (Manjusri), or by deep bows before one's *rōshi* or instructor. *Shōjin* is "a Buddhist practice in which one throws out worldly thoughts and wholeheartedly works hard on the Buddha way" (*Danshinto dokuhon*, 130). Devotion is an ideal attitude to have either as a general life "attitude" with mental concentration (*Seishōnen*, 65–66), or a feeling to acquire at more specific times when deeply engaged in Buddhist practice (e.g., *samu* at temples; ibid), when one is to avoid impurity, purify one's body, do good deeds, keep the precepts, and live a correct life (ibid.). One of the symbolic practices in doing this is to eat vegetarian food, ideally as a periodically returning occurrence (ibid. 131), or as a way of dining at specific ritual occurrences. Some temples serve these "devotional dishes," and "devotional cooking" (精進料理 *shōjin ryōri*), another word for vegetarian food, is also a permanent ingredient of the journal *Hanazono* sent to all lay members of the Myōshinji sect.[27] Eating and cooking, as well as the way of eating the devotional food, are ideally seen as a spiritual and cultivating practice (修養料理 *shūyō ryōri*, ibid. 130. See also *Gendai jiin yōkun*, 18–19).

Anjin (or *anshin*, 安心 "calm mind" or "peace of mind") and *kimochi* (気持ち, "carry the *ki*," to feel, often in combination with an adjective—e.g., *kimochi ga ii*, to feel good) are both expressions of well-being, their opposites being unease (*fuan*) or bad feelings (*kimochi warui*). These concepts express important psychological attitudes and bases of social interaction without which communication among Japanese (and among Japanese meeting foreigners) is felt to be unpleasant. The *jin* (*shin*) of *anjin* means both mind and heart, referring to both parts of the Western dichotomy of body and mind. Having control over and settling ones *kokoro* is itself a desirable state of bodily and spiritual purification.[28] Especially *anjin* is used in Myōshinji materials as also a religious ideal or a mental attitude to follow religious practice, and in general in all life

[27] In one of these (1996 August 22–27) it is explained how proper devotional eating is consuming two meals: a physical and a spiritual.

[28] E.g., 心を清浄にする精神作用 (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 8) 心のコントロール (*jōdō-e* pamphlet). "When the mind/heart is unclean, the surroundings also appear to be unclean, and such a bad environment increasingly makes people's mind dark. If the environment is quietly put in a nice order, the mind is always bright, and a true mental state is possible. Buddhist practice is not just about settling the mind. When one's own body's form is settled, more stress is put on putting in order the surrounding environment" (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 4, 33).

(e.g., *Shūmon anjinshō*, 22). It is used as a term explaining Buddhist "right mindfulness" in the Eight Fold Path, and a crucial point of conducting memorial services is for the ancestors (as well as for the ritual agents) to receive a state of *anjin* (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 167). The aim and idea of *anjin* is described in a manual used for educating lay people:

> The peace of mind of human beings is to believe in one's true self, to wake up to one's original self, to acknowledge and live a life based on the gratitude of having been given life. Also, [peace of mind comes from] naturally working for and practicing a life in virtue of repaying gratitude (*Seishōnen*, 74).

Belief, devotion, and peace of mind are concepts expressing a digital yes/no acceptance of, and commitment to, being part of the institutional order. But they are also notions embodying a "more or less" relation to the hybrid possibilities of belonging and believing. As such they are flexible qualities, potentially being part of the process of what Reader and Tanabe call "the 'high' magic of being transformed into a living Buddha" (as opposed to "the 'low' magic of producing material things" 1998, 135). Transforming religious fields vertically (from "low" to "high magic" or from no or little to strong commitment) and horizontally (spreading the qualities to others) is an ideal propagated by the institution, and I will return to this in discussing religious education and cultivation (*kyōka*).[29] Although not being concepts exclusively used in either Zen Buddhist or general religious terminology, they are generally valued to be relevant and "Zen-like."[30] As institutionalized concepts they are propagated as apprehensible ideals for the lay members, often being identified with ideals usually restricted to the clergy or monastic life—as when peace of mind is identified with enlightenment

[29] A handbook to lay members explains: "If there is not conformity between purity of faith and environment, there is no Buddhist faith" (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shirīzu* 4, 33). A handbook for priests explains the process in steps, in which it is the ideal first to explain people about the Buddha way, then to make *shinjin* arise, a *shinjin* that will later turn into *anjin*, and finally ending in a total life attitude of *shinjin*, *anjin*, and general happiness (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 167).

[30] 13.6% and 25.7% of the *sesshin*, 37.5% and 12.5% of the *zazenkai*, and 34.2% and 41.5% of the Musō Kyōkai participants placed respectively *anjin* and *shinjin* among the three most Zen-like concepts.

(e.g., *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 165 and 166).[31] Such "upward" promotion and sanctification of "daily," "this-worldly," and "lay-oriented" concepts are thus equal to the structurally opposed process of demythologizing, existentializing or democratizing monastic concepts (e.g., "downward" interpreting satori into a life-world of common language apprehensible also for the laity).

Inner content is, however, only one side of the coin, the other being form and ritual practice.

Ritual practice and how to do it right

In the Myōshinji terminology and materials in writing about religious practice, different neutral concepts of practice or actions are used, such as *jissen* (実践), *jikkō* (実行) or *shikkō* (執行), with the verbal ending *suru* meaning "to put into practice" or "carry out." The concept *gyōji* (行事) can mean both general "event" or "observance" but also more concretely religious practice or ritual event (*shūkyō gyōji*, 宗教行事). *Gyōji* is often used when describing periodically contextualized rituals (e.g., *nikka* 日課, *getsurei* 月例, or *nenjū gyōji* 年中行事), but is in general the most inclusive and widely used generic concept for religious practice in the Myōshinji materials, often in combination with more specific terms describing what kind of practice, e.g., *gishiki gyōji* 儀式行事, *girei gyōji* 儀礼行事, *kyōka gyōji* 教化行事, *bukkyō gyōji* 仏教行事, *gyōji butsudō* 行事仏道, *minzoku gyōji* 民族行事, *shukke gyōji* 出家行事, *zaike gyōji* 在家行事 etc.

Gishiki 儀式 and *girei* 儀礼 are used synonymously and almost identical to *gyōji*. These concepts are, more strictly speaking, unequivocal designations for religious rituals proper, and *gishiki* is the formal word used in the Religious Corporation Law to designate one of the functions of the (Zen) Buddhist temple. Thus in the *Zengaku Daijiten gishiki* is defined as "the manner of conducting Buddhist services [*butsuji*]." In a priest's manual (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 108) *gishiki gyōji* is defined as "all ritual practice embodying religious belief." Another identical though not as widely used concept is *sairei* 祭礼 (or *saishiki* 祭式, *saiji* 祭事, *saigi* 祭儀.

---

[31] A priest and missionary teacher in one volume of *Hanazono* (1995 January 26) identifies "decisive peace of mind" (*anjin kettei*) with satori. *Anjin* is also equated with *Jikaku anjin* (in revealing the reality of the "ordinary man," *Shūmon anjinshō*, 14).

The first character of these concepts is also read *matsuri*, a common denominator for Japanese religious (mostly Shinto) ritual or festival.

Shugyō (修行) is seldom used outside of Buddhist terminology (*butsudō shugyō*) for designating religious practice. In general it means "training," and it is often related to the monastic life, e.g., *sōdō shugyō* (僧堂修行, monastic practice) and *unsui shugyō* (雲水修行, monk's practice). In general, Zen Buddhism is often termed the "Buddhism of training."[32] Thus, a *shugyōja* is a wandering ascetic, and *shugyōsō* is an itinerant priest in search of, and expressing, Buddhist wisdom and power. *Hosshiki* (法式, "dharma rituals") is often used in the same generic sense, sometimes identical to *hōji* (法事) and *hōyō* (法要), though the latter two mostly refer more specifically to Buddhist memorial services. In emphasizing specific Zen Buddhist practice the concept *zenshū no shugyō* (禅宗の修行) is sometimes used—often specifically identified as, for instance, *ninniku* (forbearance), *samu* (manual labor), *intoku* (hidden virtue and merit), *kansha* (gratitude) and *zazen* (sitting meditation, *Hanazono Q & A*, 79). Other common concepts for specific Zen Buddhist ideal practices are compressed in terms like *sangaku*, the "three ways of learning" (observing the precepts, meditation, and wisdom; ibid. 8) and "the three main factors of everyday life in a Zen temple": cleaning, sutra chanting, and *zazen* (ibid. 68).

Whereas *gyōji* (行事) is the concept used for ritual events at a specific time and place, *gyōji* (行持) is a term used in an extended sense as "sustained practice," referring to the ideal of bringing Zen outside of defined ritual events to everyday life, of doing everything as "observances that manifest enlightenment" (Faure 1991, 298). *Gyōji* (行持) has especially been used by Dōgen and the Sōtō sect as a discursive idea and an ideal practical means of expressing and solving the paradoxical nature of the identification between precepts and realization or between *zazen* and keeping the precepts, and thus also including *gyōji* (行事) as a ritual event. In this sense, religious practice as an ideal "way of being" as a Zen Buddhist, agent, time, and place are ideally merged, or transcended, an idea also ascribed to individual practices such as *samu* or *zazen*, which I will later analyze. One dedicated nun (see 77) told me that to her, religious practice also included taking a bath or

[32] Kinds of Japanese Buddhism are sometimes seen categorized according to one attribute of religious practice—e.g., Jōdō and Nichiren Buddhism is called "Buddhism of taking refuge" (*kie bukkyō*), Shingon is called "prayer Buddhism" (*kitō bukkyō*), etc. (*Zau*, 95).

writing a thesis on the computer, bringing the mental attitude she had learned in the *sōdō* into daily activities.

Another related concept often used especially in promoting religious education is *gongyō* (勤行), "diligent practice," either generally denoting practice on the Buddha way or especially referring to morning service. The verb *tsutomeru* (勤める), which in general means to work for or serve under, in its religious sense denotes the active process for the individual of doing the religious service, of conducting individual rituals. But it also connotes being engaged in sustained practice with an ideal spirit of always working with a right attitude, of sacralizing also secular life—and as such the concepts are equivalent to *gyōji* (行持. I will return to this in discussing daily worship).

Japanese have been criticized and admired for their ability to turn all action into ceremony. It is quite significant that even the polite encouragement not to stand on ceremony (*goenryo naku*) itself is a ritualized expression indicating a ritualized relaxed atmosphere. Etiquette, code of rules, and ritual formality are stressed as important aspects in themselves and as means to encompass and/or trigger inner attitudes or experiences. The way of doing it right is often more important than having it done, "wrapping" often more important than the content.[33] This goes for religious as well as for purely secular activities (most Westerners encountering Japanese bureaucracy will agree to this), etymologically expressed with the Confucian concept of "*li*" (礼), meaning both social and moral conduct as well as religious ritual.[34] As a book for young Zen Buddhists explains, though it is often insisted that Zen originally is a religion of throwing out (*suteru*) the mind not concerned with form (方 *kata*, or 形 *katachi*), form is also praised as an important way and means of accomplishing the Zen ideals (*Seishōnen*, 13). In other books for the laity, form (姿 *sugata* or 形式 *keishiki*), manner (作法 *sahou*), and

[33] The anthropologist Joy Hendry has found many examples of what she calls "wrapping culture": "the gifts which appeared to be little more than wrapping, the folded paper as a protective talisman, powerful words without any literal meaning, white garments as a tabula rasa, uncluttered space at the heart of the house, and the depiction of Tokyo by Barthes and Bognar as the city with an 'empty centre'" (1995, 150). To use a Buddhist metaphor; the core (which is an illusion anyway) is not as important as the layers that make up not so much a product as a practice.

[34] Confucianism has also been called "the religion of *li*" (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 109). *Li* (*J. rei*) is also the first character of *reihai*, "worship." The same etymological identity between political reign and religious rituals (*matsuri*) was earlier used in Shinto terminology with the concept of *matsurigoto*, government administration.

method (仕方 *shikata*) are described in separate chapters, and as part of general instructions on how to do it right.

Formalization is not static but depends on several variables. Agency, place, time, and ritual type determine the degree of invariance or tolerance of the formal structure and behavior. The clergy, who perform rituals for others, are more inclined to be restricted and guided by correct and precise methods and manners. Refined and "matured" form to some extent is correlative to age, experience, and status. Especially *rōshi* and the *kanchō* are expected to be ritually fluent, to be ritual equilibrists to the extent that ritual formalization seems to be embodied as naturalized actions. They know how to sit in proper meditation, and they know how to chant sutras correctly. Chanting sutras is a quality of being able not only to read but also to memorize and to make it sound correct, in harmony and rhythm, and with the right intonations and breaks to breathe. As Maurice Bloch (1973) noted, chant, song, rhythm, and pitch are dimensions constraining invariance, as is also gesture, posture, and movements (Rappaport 1999, 332). But even experienced priests can make mistakes. He can forget some words, mispronounce names—I heard of a priest who even managed to say the wrong name of the *kaimyō* at a funeral—or, while almost dozing, simply forget where in the chanting he was. Besides being a status performance, having several monks or priests assisting is also practical and secures correct procedures. Sometimes whole chapters might be skipped (if, for instance the long Kannongyō is chanted), with or without the approval of the persons to whom the service is conducted—the latter might not find out, or may even insist on making it shorter. The important thing is to keep the flow going, make the ritual enact itself with the mastery of the priest. To assist priests performing rituals, there is a three-volume guidebook (*Kōko hosshiki bonbaishō*) with detailed and minutely illustrated examples, so that every single movement can be correctly copied and adopted to the textual passages, oral and ritual performances. These books are often used by priests, and they are part of the teaching material in classes on religious practice at Hanazono Daigaku.

Most people do have an intuitive feeling of which behavior is suitable to which domain. Some forms of gesture and behavior suitable in a Shinto shrine (e.g., clapping ones hands) are intuitively felt to be wrong or improper at a Buddhist temple. Some ritual formality transcends religious and institutional boundaries, e.g., bowing and not pointing the feet toward the enshrined deities. Some rituals require less formalistic endeavors, and give more room for variation. Individuals conducting

rituals at home or privately at local temples may not strictly follow the correct codes, and a video on *zazen* from the Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho (featuring Myōshinji priests) even encouraged people to sit in a position felt to be most comfortable. Rituals in which institutional affiliation and canonic content is of secondary importance are more loosely structured and variable, as, for instance, the case of the Manninkō festival will show (see 239). Although one is encouraged to accept and commit oneself to the rules and structures of single rituals and ritual sequences, no restrictions are made to maintain the forms. Public rituals at temples or the main temple with the clergy participating generally are more restricted by rules and correct behavior, the kind of behavior depending on the ritual kind (e.g., sitting in *seiza* position is proper not for *zazen* but for tea ceremonies, chanting, or dharma talks). *Zazen* is what Rappaport would call a ritual with a high degree of canonical components and thus is itself a highly invariant ritual (1999, 329). *Zazen* is a standardized prototype ideal model *of* what the patriarchs did and how they did it, and it is also a model *for* the participants to be enacted as precisely as possible. Both monastic life and *zazenkai* for the laity are thus extremely ritualized, and experiencing a *zazenkai* at Eiheiji or Myōshinji is experiencing Zen form and the way to do it right in its utmost degree.

Meditating, eating, walking, or going to the toilet are "taught" in sequences, and the way to wrap and unwrap the dishes is not only practiced minutely during the *zazenkai*, but even rehearsed for half an hour before it started. Being severely scolded for not doing it right is the equivalent to being beaten by the *keisaku* during meditation: whether asking for the stick oneself or not, both "punishments" are expressions of institutional order and symbolic power, but also helpful means in one's own apprehension of not doing it entirely correct.[35] These kinds of ritual acts actually demand and are based on people not being able to do it correct. The instructors are there to help and to punish; punishment and "failing" are simply part of the game and part of the ritual process of learning to do it right. Sequences are taught, rehearsed, and performed in order to make the whole structure flow,

[35] That asking for the *keisaku* has the important value of being beaten in order to "wake up" or just to remove bodily tension, is, I suggest, also an expression of not being able to do it exactly and properly—at least not all the time.

in order to complete the whole *zazenkai*, the whole monastic life as one long, correctly performed ritual.

It cannot be emphasized clearly enough that form itself is important in the living Japanese religious context. Although the highly appreciated *Heart Sutra* identifies form with emptiness, and the Japanese themselves often ironically make jokes about it (rigid behavior can also have an element of "play"), ritual formalization is not empty of meaning or significance. Form is itself a way of and a vessel for communication and instrumental efficacy in the interaction between humans and between this world and the other world. Although there are many layers of meaning and understanding, forms do restrict the spectrum and frames of individual ascriptions of meaning. Promoting identity between ritual and belief, between rules and enacting according to the rules, might be a normative ideal, but through formalization the channels of communication become less hybrid and more "filtered." This does not mean that personal belief is entirely restricted to ritual codes, only that ritualized formalization is also a form of social control transcending individuality, the maintenance and incorporation of (more or less) invariant etiquette and manners also being means of keeping the adherents within the institutional order.

Correct mental attitude and ritual behavior are ideal ways to approach as well as actively generate the objects of belief and practice. Such qualities are ideally embodied in the Zen masters (and to a lesser extent the general clergy), whose ideal enlightened mind and social self (both being based on a no-self and a strong self) correlates to both high degrees of "meaning to mean it" and "getting it right." Fluency in social norms and ritual formalism combined with a capability of transcending boundaries between an "inner" and an "outer" self, between "form" and "content," is not only a Zen ideal, but also a general Japanese (and Confucian) ideal of relational self-actualizing (Miller 1997, 152), the accordance with which makes the Zen institution agreeable to also nonrenouncers and "the general populace."

3.3 Religious Education

Education, training, cultivation, and mission

The institution depends both on its members as well as on its priests and teachers to continue the lineage, and to keep the tradition alive. Education (教育 *kyōiku*), training (修行 *shugyō*), and teaching the dharma

or "cultivation" (教化 *kyōka*) are important elements of what could more generally be called religious education for students, monks, and priests as well as for lay members within the Myōshinji institution. In order to strengthen the relationship to the lay members, a large number of publications and activities (活動 *katsudō*) are carried out in the name of *kyōka*. *Fukyō* (布教), and alternatively *dendō* (伝道), means mission or propagating the Buddhist dharma (to those who do not already possess it, i.e., those who are not already institutionalized members); but both concepts are in reality often treated as synonymous to *kyōka*, sometimes simply termed *fukyōka katsudō* (布教化活動, missionary and cultivating activities).[36]

The officially defined aim of *kyōka* (which is almost identical to the defined aim of *fukyō, Shūsei*, 361) is

> to propagate the unique [i.e., the unbroken line of Buddha and the patriarchs] Zen of Kaisan Daishi, to make the general populace realize their own true self leading them from suffering to awakening, and to build a sound and peaceful society (ibid. 11).

In the most general sense, *kyōka* and *fukyō* are all-inclusive terms of, or rather ideal *aspects* of, all institutional activity. In this sense both the teaching of the monks in the training hall, instructing lay people on courses to get certification to become priests, research seminars, *zazenkai*, rituals, religious, and social gatherings are part of propagating the religious teaching and practice of the sect.[37] On the other hand, religious cultivation is mostly understood to be directed toward the lay members (*danto*) and the general populace (*taishū*) and as specific religious training being possible aspects of, but not necessarily identical to, rituals. Ritual events, such as yearly rituals or rituals of passage, *may* be within the framework of religious cultivation, and religious gatherings (*kai*) *are* religious cultivation—i.e., they are created by the institution as such, though not necessarily considered so by the individual participants. *Kyōka* is thus sometimes distinguished from "practice-learning" (*gyōgaku*,

---

[36] Interestingly, when I asked about the difference at the Kyōka Sentā two of the priests employed there had to look in Buddhist dictionaries to find the meaning of the concepts.

[37] In *Jūshoku oboegaki* 82–89 *kyōka* is thus set up to be an ideal at both yearly rituals, special (*tokubetsu*) rituals, mental and cultural training (*shuyō gyōji*), and at religious occasions "from olden times." The different kinds of *fukyō* are listed (but not really explained nor logically arranged) in *Shūsei* 361–84. I will not follow this categorization, though all the individual items will be dealt with.

e.g., *Shūsei*, 10–11)[38] for persons within or on the way to becoming part of the carrier system of the institution. In this chapter I will discuss the institutional frames, structure, and strategy of religious education, training, and cultivation for both clergy and laity.

Cultivating the clergy

The clerical process embodies (almost) all stages of life. Myōshinji owns and runs the educational organs and training facilities for all stages: nursery school, kindergarten, high-school, university, training halls and facilities for arranging courses for pre- and postmonastic religious education.

Every morning just before nine, the path on the western side of the *honzan* in Kyoto is full of women in their early twenties and early thirties. They are mothers of the young children to be taken care of in one of the subtemples, Chisho-in. Buddhist nursery schools (*hoikuen*) and kindergartens (*yōchien*) might be an option for those wishing to have their children start an early religious career. Religious sentiments or affiliation does not, however, necessarily have any role to play in choosing kindergarten, school, or university. None of the mothers outside the temple nursery school I talked to were members of Myōshinji or seemed to take any specific interest in religion. The priest and director, Kawashima Shinkai, had taken over the nursery school from his father. When I visited him and his assisting wife in 1997, he explained to me that the temple had nothing to do with the nursery school. Except for the daily chanting of Buddhist sutras and the ten minutes of *zazen* held in the mornings, there was nothing Zen about it, he said. These practices were performed admiringly correct, though. The priest even carried his *keisaku* stick during the meditation time, gently adjusting the backs of the children.

Although religion as a subject matter is not taught in public schools, some priests employed as school teachers do touch upon aspects that would somehow be related to religion. Eighty percent of those having

---

[38] "Practice and learning/studying is one and the same" (行学一如, *gyōgaku ichinyo*) is one of the many Zen Buddhist slogans—also of the Hanazono University (*Shūkyōbu gaido*, 14)—showing that perhaps the most famous Zen saying ascribed to Bodhidharma, *kyōge betsuden*, only signifies one thread in an enormous network of ideas and rhetorical slogans.

a concurrent office thought of these also as playing a role in spreading the teachings of Buddhism.[39] Both the high school (*kōkō*) and the university are open to all and are only partly religious institutions. Hanazono University has several departments but specializes in Buddhist studies with courses on Zen/Buddhist history, ideas, and culture. The Department of Religious Studies—the employees at which need to belong to the Zen clerical system (*Shūkyōbu gaido*, 9)—defines itself as having a Buddhist spirit (*seishin*), with a particular emphasis on Zen. On their homepage it is said that the spirit behind the university's establishment is

> *to positively cultivate the personalities of students and contribute to human civilization based on Buddhist ethics. Students here are taught to develop a "Buddha Mind," or more specifically the mental and spiritual attitude to the world handed down to us by the Zen master Rinzai. Based on a solid grounding in the rich Rinzai Zen teachings, our students are encouraged to lead full, active lives. As the only university in the world founded on the spirit of Rinzai Zen we offer a uniquely well-rounded education, predicated on the dictum "seek thyself." This means not just to learn about Western humanism and modern industrialized culture, but to be aware of the full creative and spiritual potential of the self. Such awareness should lead to a view of the world that radiates like the sun to encompass all living beings with understanding and compassion.* (http://www.hanazono.ac.jp/english/e_univer/index.html)

Besides academic approaches to Buddhism—in which the harmony between Zen and the scriptures (教禅一致 *kyōzen itchi*) is taught to be complementary to negation of texts (教外別傳 *kyōge betsuden*)—there are also courses in the practical sides of Buddhist life aiming primarily at temple sons who learn how to read and write classical Buddhist characters and how to chant with the correct intonation. Also, the newly built stupa and churchlike *kyōdō* (教堂, "teaching hall") from 1999 was created to embody a spiritual environment with activities like meditation, sutra-copying, music, religious lectures, celebration of religious festivals, weddings, ordinations, meetings (*Shūkyōbu gaido*, 14–28). The meditation hall on the first floor of the Mumonkan building is used for weekly *zazen* training for students of the religious faculty and is open four days a week for individual participation. During several of my stays

---

[39] *Hakusho*, 9.3% of all Myōshinji priests hold a concurrent office (ibid. 7). It is not mentioned how many of these are schoolteachers, but I suspect the number is rather significant. See *Kenkyū hōkuko* 4, 51 for an example of a priest interpreting religious education.

I went to the morning sessions regularly and experienced in practice the general problems of having young students approach religious practice: one or two times there were four of us sitting; most times I was alone with an elderly gentleman (see 212). I saw only one or two students, none of them continuing to the *kyōdo* for morning chanting. Participating in the yearly "university retreat" held at Myōshinji gave me hints about the general motivation of the student participation: some clearly had no other interest than to get educational credits, another aspect of "form" being as important as "content." That 60% of the students from temple families and 33% from lay families of the respondents from the religious studies classes and respectively 53% and 32% of the participants in the *ōzesshin* noted, in my survey, that they had interest in Zen prior to the enrollment at the university of course does not necessarily mean that they are interested in actually participating in Zen practice at the university.

Another kind of practice getting more attention from the students is archery. Behind the Mumonkan building, a training hall for archery (*kyūdō dōjō*) is built for the young boys and girls to enjoy themselves in a healthy "sport" and to participate in an alternative kind of religious practice. "It is also called standing Zen (立禅 *ritsu zen*)," a student holding his long bow and dressed in the characteristic black and white uniform and white tabi socks told me. Lack of the interest in and ability to concentrate in *zazen* might be a point of critique against youthful students not attending *zazenkai*, but the level of concentration and pointed energy seem not to be a problem in the *kyūdō dōjō*. The students silently bow in front of the *butsudan*, the target and the Buddha image, every moment being performed ritually correct. Sometimes they even start with thirty minutes of *zazen*. "But it is not a matter of only hitting the target," another student told me. "It is not even only about shooting the arrow. It is about mental discipline and doing it right. Just like a tea ceremony."

The priest-to-be students, however, have other possibilities of religious training while studying. Some are living and serving at a temple, and others live in the *zen juku* (禅塾), a dormitory for students of Hanazono University. The building is just opposite Myōshinji, at which the students assist in ritual occasions. The *juku* is also called a "semi-*sōdō*" as the daily program besides attending classes and doing homework consists of early rising, cleaning, chanting, and meditation under a master responsible for the students. As in the real *sōdō* there is an entrance ceremony (*nyūgaku*

shiki),[40] and the *juku* students are required to also participate in retreats and the long *rōhatsu* retreat (see 208), though social activities (such as softball, bowling, etc.) are also part of the semimonastic life. Living there is not only motivated by purely spiritual reasons. The students receive money from Myōshinji for assisting at rituals, and the *juku*-stay is a way to earn merit on the institutional ranking ladder. This *juku* system, which in general is a widespread and mostly nonreligious Japanese phenomenon (often translated as "private school"), depends on, but is not part of, the official educational system. Other such educational activities entirely within institutional frames include the cultivation and training of the clergy before, after, and of course during monastic life, which is the central training system, per se, on which all other religious educational activities are symbolically modeled.

Young students (学徒 *gakuto*)—primarily the sons of priests—are offered and urged to participate in study and training courses (学徒研修会 *gakuto kenshūkai*) held at the main temple in Kyoto once a year and ad hoc (but not very frequently) locally at parish temples (*jiin gakuto kōshūkai*). The aim is to "stimulate [the progress toward] enlightenment and to train them in the basic education and religious sentiments of the clergy" (*Shūsei*, 379), and completing these courses is obligatory for those having achieved a priestly rank, i.e., those entering the institutional career.[41] The courses have been criticized for being over-institutionalized practice that ought to be in the hands of the father and the already existing school system (*Kyōka biyō*, 73), but since most priests only make their sons participate to a very moderate extent in the daily temple life, the educational courses are also appreciated as helping hands in shaping the identity of the future temple heir. A course, ideally lasting up to three days, include parts of monastic practice such as *zazen*, sutra copying, chanting, work (*samu*), cleaning, lectures (*kōwa*), learning and practicing correct manners and gestures, but also gymnastics, games, play, and relaxation is scheduled, all enveloped in opening and closing ceremonies, the latter called "descending the mountain."[42]

Following R. S. Peters, Fitzgerald distinguishes between education and training in his analyses of Japanese religions as "ritual order" (Fitzgerald 1993). The former is learning rational and moral autonomy, the latter

[40] This includes sutra chanting, speeches, etc., but no *niwazume* or *tangazume* rituals (see 160).
[41] In the 2000 course, there were fifty-two participants (*Shōbōrin* 2000, 9/10:10).
[42] A schedule for a three-day course is listed in *Kyōka biyō* 76–80.

learning of "precise, predetermined, modes of behavior in order to reproduce a pre-determined end" (ibid. 335). On a spectrum displaying geographical and cultural ideals education is clearly the norm and ideal of most Western systems, training the norm (and often also the stated ideal) of Japan. These two ways of teaching and learning can also be applied within the same system as distinctive or relative parts. For a person within the Zen institutional career, university teaching is thus closer to the education pole, and monastic life closer—if not entirely identical to—the training pole. The training hall (*sōdō*) is both a means of personal cultivation and "one of the most powerful agencies in the reproduction of the symbolic and ritual order," as Fitzgerald (ibid. 333) says of the Japanese school system. Monastic training (*shugyō*) involves discipline, rules and ritual performances, but also the shaping of time, space, and power relations. It is itself a symbol legitimating the religious tradition, but also of a symbolic order reaching out to direct involvement with the lay society in which exchange is a necessary component. The training hall is considered by both clergy and lay to be "true Zen," the Zen "essence" as what distinguishes it from other sects, even though to most it is primarily experienced as a transitional period, especially to those only experiencing monastic life through the periodical *ango-e* courses (see 59). Such courses principally include all the elements from the "real" monastic stay (also *niwazume, danka*, meditation and alms-gathering) the ideal being to see it as a *sesshin*, cultivating the awakening of the *sōryo* and the self-confidence of a Zen cleric (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 269). Courses are conducted as three- or ten-day periods over five years at the least, after completion of which the participants get a certificate stating their cleric qualifications.[43]

Once having become a priest or an assisting priest, some feel no need for further education. The institution, however, encourages its clergy to continuously keep practicing and cultivating. It needs professional instructors, and it needs to keep up the ties to the local clergy who in turn are supposed to commit themselves to the authority of the institution. Postmonastic training and education involves higher ranking educators educating persons in the lowest parts of the same hierarchy, who in turn themselves later are going to become full-fledged teachers

[43] See an example of a schedule for a three-day course in *Kyōka biyō*, 116–119. On the institutional ranking ladder, five *ango-e* years correspond to one full year in the training hall. On the 49th *ango-e* in 2000, there were forty-one participants (*Shōbōrin* 2000, 9/10:12).

(教師 *kyōshi*) with the authorization to guide the lay community and perhaps later the younger generations of priests.

Special study assemblies for priests (住職研修会 *jūshoku kenshūkai*)—and separate ones for their wives (寺庭婦人研修会 *jitei fujin kenshūkai*) and for nuns (尼僧団研修会 *nisōdan kenshūkai*)—are held at the *honzan* or in the local parish to advance his/her practical abilities of mission, study, and administration and other skills necessary for a priest to possess (e.g., rituals, dignity, poems, *Shūsei* 352). The schedule for a typical one- or two-day course include both actual (intellectual) study (lectures and discussions on dogmatic, institutional, or practical themes) and religious practice such as *zazen* and sutra chanting. Opening and closing rituals (*kaikai* and *heikai shiki*) include both chanting of sutras, *dharani* and *ekō* to Buddha and the founder of the monastery (*honzon* and *kaizan fugin*) and the four Bodhisattva vows are chanted.[44] Ad-hoc study or research groups (研究会 *kenkyūkai*) are established when contemporary problems are in need of special discussion or attention, one of which—the research group of monastic reform (*sōfu sasshin kenkyūkai*)—is considered important and general enough to be included permanently in the official constitution of the sect (*Shūsei* 382–84).

In general all priests are considered missionaries. As one priest wrote: "A priest not propagating the Buddhist dharma is like a flower shop not selling flowers, or a sake shop not selling sake" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 271). However, in order to legally carry the title *fukyō kyōshi*, or *fukyōshi*, 布教師 "missionary teacher," which authorizes him and his missionary colleagues to conduct the obligatory yearly missionary visits (*junkyō*, "teaching round") to the local temples, he has to have an authorized certificate from the headquarters. This is acquired through missionary courses (*fukyō kōshūkai*) conducted for the participants to learn and develop insight into the sect doctrines and to study and research ritual practice (*hosshiki*) and missionary methods (ibid. 373). There are presently only 148 *fukyō kyōshi* in Myōshinji, with an average of four to five new each year (*Hakusho*, 120), the small number considered to be a problem to the institution (ibid.).[45]

---

[44] See an example of a one- and two-day course for priests in *Kyōka biyō*, 53–55, and for priest wives (one- and three-day courses) in ibid. 63–67.

[45] See an example of a schedule for *fukyō kōshūkai* (three-day course) in *Kyōka biyō* 87–90. In 2000 there were nine new participants to the ritual of acquiring certificate to become missionary teachers (*tekininshū juyo shiki*, Shōbōrin 2000, 9/10: 10–11).

In a survey conducted by the Kyōka Sentā, fifty-six percent of those who study feel they have too little knowledge of Buddhism (ibid. 25). It is not, however, explained how, what, and how much is studied, but the respondents might have thought of private study and reading of some of the published materials from the Kyōka Sentā. Guidebooks, information, and research materials for priests (and their wives) on how to live a proper life *as* a priest (and priest wife) and in general suggestions on how to cope with living a Zen life in an "ordinary" world can be obtained there, as can materials on how to religiously educate and cultivate the laity using different media in order to meet the challenges of a modern society. The manuals and guides for priests are both meant to be supporting means of refreshing what they are already supposed to know, or for those who need to learn more or update their theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as their relation to the institution. The *Jūshoku zayū* ("Manual for priests"), *Jūshoku oboegaki* ("Memorandum for Priests"), *Jūshoku hikkei* ("Handbook for priests"), and *Rinzaishū gendai jūshokugaku kōza* ("Study course for modern Rinzai sect priests") are written for priests (and their wives) as a means to guide them in the changing times of modernity. Apart from discussing and making normative statements about specific issues, the guidebooks encourage them to live up to the most general ideals of a Buddhist priest. They should lead respectable and active lives as temple priests, be representatives of the Myōshinji institution and the Buddha way, be spiritual guides for the devotees, and live up to the expectations of securing the future of the religious tradition (*Zau*, preface). In this way, every correct performed "Zennish" (*zenteki*) action—from *zazen* to cleaning and leading a model life of a temple family—is a kind of *kyōka* (ibid. 85, 164), a pragmatic and paradigmatic interpretation of the doctrine of the sustained practice activating and expressing Buddha nature.

Another of the important functions of the Kyōka Sentā is to conduct and publish research materials and surveys. Surveys and research reports serve not only as gathering information to make a description of circumstances. They are also in themselves prescriptive, they have a normative goal, which is also stated in all of the surveys from the Myōshinji sect. The background is usually a problem, which is either studied, researched, or simply identified as a problematic theme, waiting from responses and further initiatives. For instance, in *Kenkyū hōkoku* 1 the main theme was a survey on the concept of karma, *gō*. As this doctrinally difficult and many-layered concept has many possible levels

of interpretation, it is naturally not itself a problem to the institution. The problem arises when doctrinal ideas are related to and applied on concrete, social circumstances and religious practices, which are not approved by all, or even by the institution deemed to be against the teachings and practices of the religion. By conducting such a survey, the persons behind it, representing the educational and missionary department of the institution, hope not only to shed light on these issues, but also to influence and correct the ideas and practices of the priests of the sect. Surveys thus themselves become *kyōka*.

However, in spite of all the publications and the energy put into general attempts of cultivating and missionary work, not all priests are interested in, or even aware of, the activities from the headquarters in Kyoto. Some statistics speak for themselves: While most people (93.9%) knew of the existence of the Kyōka Sentā (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 310),[46] some were not aware of the actual activities and publications from the center. Only 66.7% knew about its publication of pamphlets (ibid. 310), and another survey showed that only 20% distribute materials (to the *danka*) from the center (*Hakusho*, 40). Some—27.7%—were not aware of there having been a survey conducted on karma (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 311), and of other activities of the center, 12.7% knew of the "dharma talk gatherings" (*hōwa no atsumai*), 5.1% knew of the children's groups (*kodomokai*), 14.8% knew of the study groups (*kenshūkai*), and only 29.3% knew of the symbolically powerful meditation hall for the general public (*Taishū Zendō*, ibid. 311). A fifth of the priests use the book *Shūmon anjinshō* and 38.5% use the *Jūshoku zayū* (ibid. 316). Most priests do, however, participate in what is termed *kyōka* activities (only 4% do not, *Hakusho*, 33); in another small survey the average of arranging such is five times a month and 56.4 times a year.[47] A larger 2002 survey showed that the most popular means of approach in cultivating and religiously educating the laity is having religious choir assemblies (*goeikakai*) and women's groups (*fujinkai*), which 38.7% and 31.4% of the Myōshinji temples claim to have (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 85). Also missionary work through notices or bulletins (*keiji dendō*) is widespread (36.6%), followed by *zazenkai* (28.4%), dharma lectures (*hōwakai*, 24.4%), traveling/excursions (19.1%), missionary work through writings

[46] 29% (973 people) responded to the questionnaires (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 310).

[47] Questionnaires were sent to only 153 persons (half of them answering) on the "actual conditions" of conducting missionary activities (*Hakusho*, 118).

(*bunsho dendō*, 15.8%), sutra copying (*shakyōkai*, 14.7%), and assemblies for elderly (11.3%), children (6.9%), youngsters (3.7%), and girl and boy scouts (1.3%). Apparently there is not correspondence between reality and ideals. Nine percent claim to actually wish to conduct *zazenkai* in the future, while only 2.2% place missionary work through bulletins and notices (*keiji dendō*), and 0.1% place girl- and boy-scout assemblies on such a list (ibid. 87). Also, 36.1% do not distribute the Hanazono pamphlet at all (ibid. 91), and in general only 79% think the activities of educating and doing missionary work (*fukyō kyōka*) for the lay members are relevant for the society (*Hakusho*, 21). Such statistical figures send strong signals to the centers of the headquarters in Kyoto about the general conditions of their attempts to live up to the stated ideals of bringing the teachings and practices of the institution out to its members. They are well aware of the fact that Myōshinji is lacking behind other sects such as Jōdōshū or Sōtōshū in terms of missionary activities (ibid. 37). As one priest (from the *honzan*) told me, there is a huge distance between Kyoto and the countryside. Center and periphery are divided geographically and mentally, a tendency not helping to break down the other division between clergy and lay, which is, after all, the ideal of *some* of the teachings and practices of *some* of the agents within the contemporary institution.

Cultivating the laity

Lay people are educated in the secular educational system, and though they may choose a religious university, they are not trained to acquire a certain status or position within the religious institution. They are traditionally affiliated with a temple, but they may choose to be cultivated to become "believers" (*shinto*). They usually do not take part in the monastic training, though they may do so in a *zazenkai*. Some of the educational career may be identical to that of the priests-to-be, but in general the institutional mobility or progression of the laity is distinctively different from the clergy's, the problems and strategic positions of which I will discuss later.

Religious education or cultivation is conducted both through written texts and institutionally arranged practices. Both the Kyōka Sentā, aiming at the clergy, and the Hanazonokai, aiming at the laity, send out text materials to their members, or they have it stored to hand out upon request. These include handbooks, pamphlets, and monthly journals,

some of which are intended for special age groups[48] or special ritual occasions.[49] The Rinzai sects have no common handbook (*hikkei*) for the laity as do some of the other Buddhist sects, but general introductory books aimed at all members of the Zen sects (e.g., *Shingyō kyōten* and *Danshinto dokuhon*) are available at Buddhist bookstores as well as several of the main quarters of the Zen sects. Most of the books include general introductions to the teaching, history, doctrines, and practices of the Myōshinji and/or Rinzai lineage. Books containing "canonical texts" are manifold in all Buddhist sects, as are scholarly interpretations of Buddhist literature and collected essays and sermons written by priests, some of which can be bought at the Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho or in the shop of the Assembly Hall (*kaikan*), the latter also selling sutra books, souvenirs, amulets, tapes, videos, and bric-a-brac. A monthly magazine like *Hanazono* mixes religious and nonreligious content, or makes "secular" themes (cooking, fairytales, health, nature, etc.) equal to or assimilated with religious themes (e.g., devotional cooking, well-being as religious ideal, etc.), and each volume has several levels or fields represented, from scholastic readings of sutras (the famous professor Yanagida Seizan has contributed many times) to *Jataka* stories, cartoons, and letters from the readers. Also the form of "texts" and communication has seen new methods in the last decades. Telephone dharma talks, videos, and the Internet are new kinds of media used by individual temples and the *honzan*.[50]

Religious gatherings within the frames of cultivation are carried out either at the main temple or at local temples. The Kyōka Sentā ("Religious Education Center")—being part of the main department of religious education (Kyōka Honbu)—as well as the lay organization Hanazonokai are situated at the main center, as are all the other departments, organizations, and assemblies that directly or indirectly are related to the lay members. But the center is also visible in the periphery. The *kanchō* goes on missionary visits to local temples, an

[48] E.g., *Seishōnen*, which is a manual for instructing young people of different age groups in right Zen theory and practice, progressing from youngest to oldest.

[49] E.g., pamphlets or special volumes of the journal *Hanazono* on the different yearly rituals or rites of passage.

[50] See *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 228–38 for examples of different media suggested for use in *kyōka* activities. The same book (170) classifies three means of *fukyō*: through the body (ritual), the mind (art, literature), and words (preaching).

activity called *shinke* (親化), which is described as the most important missionary activity (*Hakusho*, 108) and at which he conducts precepts ceremonies (see 246) and encourages members to work for achieving a spirit of *shinjin* and a "zennish" life (*Shūsei*, 363–65). Also other representatives from the institution—missionary teachers or one of the twelve instructors (*kōshi*) at the Kyōka Sentā—go on a regular yearly visit (*teiki junkyō*) or, on special occasions (*tokubetsu junkyō*), to the twenty-seven local parishes doing missionary work (ibid. 365–67).[51] The local temple might also individually arrange activities, either through the individual priest and/or the local Hanazonokai or some of the other *kai* —with or without the assistance of the *honzan*.

A *kai* (会) is a concept meaning both an assembly or gathering (a form of activity, e.g., *katsudō*) and an association (a group of agents, often corresponding to an *undō*, a movement). The religious *kai* differs from the aforementioned *kō* in being structured by and related to the institution, though they in reality might include the same persons, conducting the same practices. Although some Myōshinji *kai* are formed as groups or committees based on certain themes, even the yearly general assemblies include religious practice. Some groups are open to all, whereas belonging to other groups depend on agency, sex, age, and/or practice. Although there is overlapping, there is also a tendency to correlation between these variables and type and extent of religious practice—also for participation in yearly rituals. One group may be responsible for several activities (e.g., *fujinkai*), and some groups may participate as a specific *kai* at different occasions (e.g., Musō Kyokai, which is often participating at certain ceremonies and festivals). The extent to which religious cultivation also includes secular activities depends on the type of group and gatherings. Some—for instance the gatherings for children—give more attention to including activities such as play and relaxation, than do a *zazenkai*. The Young Boys and Girls Club (Shōnen Shōjōkai) started as a softball club within the framework of the Hanazonokai (Hanazonokai Shōnen Sofutobōru Kai).

Hanazonokai (花園会) is the official umbrella organization of lay and clerical Buddhists within the Myōshinji institution. It publishes and distributes materials (first of all the small monthly magazine *Hanazono* but also *Hanazonokaihō* and *Jitō sōsho*), it arranges religious activities (*katsudō*) and periodic gatherings (*kai*) and it includes other sub-organizations

[51] In 2004 there was an estimated audience of 52,263 people all over the country for regular visits and 11,469 people for occasional visits (KH 11, 205).

within the framework of religious education (*kyōiku*), cultivation (*kyōka*) and mission (*dendō*). The organization is modelled after the founder of the sect, emperor Hanazono, from whom the name is taken, and whose name is used in the metaphor of making a flower garden of the heart (*kokoro no hanazono*) bloom (e.g., *Hanazono Q & A*, 107 and *Shingyō kyōten*, 21). The metaphor is also used in the name of the restaurant in the assembly hall Hanazono Kaikan.

The official aim of the Hanazonokai is to

> honor the imperial will of monk-emperor Hanazono, to support the sect and main temple, to contribute to the development of the prosperity of the sect, to strive for good relationships between the main temple complex and the local temples and to put heart and soul into developing awakening of same faith and same practice of the lay believers (*Shūsei*, 405).

The *kai* is a central unit mediating and generating relations between center and periphery, between clergy and laity (both of whom are represented in the group), between individual members and individual ways of belonging to the institution, ideally being a relation of "associates of shared belief" resulting in a general sect consciousness (教団意識 *kyōdan ishiki, Jūshoku oboegaki*, 116). Ideally the *kai* also should respond to the fact that religion in contemporary Japan is individualistic, and especially urbanized people therefore do not grow up with natural close relations to their temples, that the family ideals have collapsed, and that there is a general misunderstanding of religion being solely a matter of death, and not life (*Hanazono Q & A*, 114).

The exact number of members (会員 *kaiin*) of the Hanazonokai is hard to define. Not only does lack of corresponding methods of counting make statistics and comparison difficult, but also the terminology of when exactly a member is a member is not definite. Some count only registered members of the Hanazonokai, others count "believers" (*shinja*), including both those not having any institutional affiliation as well as those being traditionally related to the temple as *danka*, or *danshinto*. Until the latest revision of the law the figures from the religious corporations were entirely based on voluntarily submitted data—typically counting in households (戸 *to*) the numbers of which are multiplied with the number of individuals estimated to make up a typical family.[52] Since the revised Religious Corporation Law demands

[52] Such a way of counting adherents is not cogently accepted in all sects. Some count any receiving household member subscribing to their periodicals, others count everybody who purchases their talismans (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1981, 237).

reports from every temple about the number of their members, quite a few influential priests have, in the name of protecting religious freedom (and possibly also for protecting the right to obscure data used in calculating tax-exemption), denied sending in such information. Statistics counted members to be respectively 1,257,055[53] in 1892 (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 8), 1,887,753 in 1950, decreasing to 1.5 million in 1975 (*Bukkyō Kanrenzusho*, 115) and the official yearbook of the Agency for Cultural Affairs in 1999 stated 329,156 believers (信者 *shinja*),[54] and in 2003 the number had risen to about 336.539, the number of which corresponds to the households being counted as Hanazonokai members (*Shōbōrin* 2003, 53, 11: 7). In one survey (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 8) 41.81% of the asked members were in their sixties, which is twice as many as the priests from the same sect (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 64).

The Hanazonokai is an organization representing lay members as well as the ideals of the institution, represented by members of the clergy working at the *honzan*. The local Hanazonokai groups are represented in all parishes. They function as the organs of the institution, but often also as local community groups of people having common interests, not necessarily religious, let alone in accordance with the ideals of the Myōshinji sect. Often participating in Hanazonokai activities is a village obligation, where members are not even necessarily Myōshinji members nor *danka* at the local temple which conducts the assemblies. That is, all Myōshinji *danka* are automatically members of the Hanazonokai. But, although the majority knows about Hanazonokai,[55] not all users are automatically Myōshinji *danka*, some of them using it as a trans-sectarian *kō*. As a village community group the *kai* is also the place to participate in social gatherings, to meet acquaintances, for business groups to make relations, or for conducting charity activities. Religious and secular activities are in such instances blurred categories, and in fact purposefully so. Seeing social activities (*shakai katsudō*) as being related to religion is also part of the overall strategy of the religious education and cultivation of the institution. Among these activities a manual for priests (*Jūshoku oboegaki*) counts education (school activi-

[53] Of these, 181,700 were classified as *shinto*, "believers," as opposed to *danto* (see below), though no methods of counting or classification were specified.

[54] In the same book from 1995, the number of *shinja* is 308,187 (Agency for Cultural Affairs 1995, 73).

[55] In one survey 85% of the people participating in Hanazonokai arrangements actually knew about the Hanazonokai institution (KH 8, 2002: 7).

ties for different ages), social welfare (*fukushi*), charity and voluntary activities, Buddhist counselling, culture and general entertainment. Most institutional gatherings have leisure incorporated, and one guide book for Hanazonokai activities stresses the fact that recreation (*rekurieision*) itself makes religious practice (*gyōji*) enjoyable and advances the consciousness of being a member of the *kai* (*Tebiki*, 50). By thus including such activities the Hanazonokai and the overall institution symbolically transfer these into a religious domain, a domain mainly defined by the institution. Secular activities are, however, also in themselves necessary components of a modern institution which also has to respond to the demands from society at large. The "social department" (*shakaika*) of the *honzan* has to take care of managing the role of the institution in social issues (discrimination, human rights, welfare) as well as administrating the purely educational aspects of running kindergarten, school and university. Also, the temple family has to be part in an overall social world without which the religious aspects would only play a minor role. This double-sided function, in which both the institution and the local community necessarily have interests in being active agents, also counts for other groups, assemblies and activities within the category of *kyōka*.

The Hanazonokai has sub-groups divided by age. Smaller children can participate in *kodomokai*—with or without their parents (mothers)[56]—boys and girls in *shōnen shōjōkai*, young people in their twenties and thirties in *seishōnenkai*, gatherings which are held both at the main temple in Kyoto and locally at the individual temples, the latter which often combine institutional (*kai*) activities with non- or trans-sectarian gatherings (*kō* or general Buddhist assemblies, e.g., Rinzaishū Seinensō no kai or Bukkyō Seinenkai). Although the groups may have attached a specific name to it (e.g., "Assembly of Daruma's Children" or "Traffic Safety Prayer Service and Flower Festival", *Seishōnen*, 103, 106) the actual content of the activities often is the same.[57] They may include chanting, dharma talks (*hōwa*), *zazen*, cleaning and/or working (*samu*), sutra copying (*shakyō*), learning manners and good behavior (e.g., feeling gratitude for food prepared by one's mother, *Tebiki*, 66), games, play,

[56] Some assemblies are for both parents and children (e.g., 'Mother and child *zazen* and *shakyō*', 'Tebiki, 67)—and at most *kodomokai* the mothers will join anyhow, which itself is a way to effectuate missionary and cultivating activities (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 30).

[57] See *Seishōnen* and *Tebiki*, 53–59, 74–89 and *Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 262–277 for different examples of assemblies and programs for children and youngsters.

fun and relaxation—the younger the more leisure. A gathering might be arranged weekly, monthly or yearly, at specific times (holidays or seasonal breaks), lasting from a couple of hours to a few days. The local gatherings are more informal than the ones held at the *honzan*. Once when I was staying in the former International Zen Center close to Hiroshima we were invited to join the summer children's assembly of the neighbouring temple. We went swimming, playing, helped arrange for *obon* activities and both the young assistants and the priests performed on absolute slack rope. Although the aim for one yearly gathering for boys and girls (Zenkoku Hanazonokai Shōnen Shōjō Kenshū Daikai) stated its primary aim to committing oneself to be a Buddha's child and to cultivate mind and body toward final enlightenment (*Hakusho*, 131) it is true in general and especially for children that institutionally defined ideals and programmatic statements do not necessarily say anything about the actual practice and degree of commitment of the participants. Religious education and cultivation for children and youngsters is as much institutionalized and structured leisure activities as it is actual religious practice.

Having a hold on the youth is valuable and in the long run a beneficial investment, especially in the negative demographic developments of modern times with too few young people and a growing number of old people. Apart from the sheer numbers, also focusing on the qualitative relations to the potential group of adults-to-be-members has long been part of the concern of the institution. Already in 1955 a study assembly for young believers (Seinen Daikyō Kōshūkai) was established in order to "search for measures to strengthen the close relationship between temlpes and the way of cultivating the youth" (*Hanazonokai Zasshi*, 49). Some of these may feel committed to stay active within the institution, perhaps continuing participation in cultivating activities (*kyōka katsudō*) as grown ups. There are study and practice assemblies for elder people (*rōjinkai*) and men in their middle-ages (*seisōnen kenshūkai*), the latter being a counterpart to the important "spouses' associations", *fujinkai*.

Fujinkai (婦人会 or *joseibu* (女性部 "women's groups"), are groups of women under the central Hanazonokai at the *honzan*, operating locally as independent assemblies in the 27 regions (*kyōbu*), each with their own representatives (*daikyō*), of which there are about 200 in the whole country. Often the priest's wife is the representative or leader (*kaichō*), being in charge of arranging meetings and events at the temple, e.g., yearly rituals, *zazenkai*, sutra copying assemblies (*shakyōkai*), flower arrangements (*ikebana*) or tea ceremonies (*sadō*). Sometimes the women's clubs are identical to the local Hanazonokai, Musō Kyōkai (see below)

or even the local trans-sectarian *kō*. That some groups seem to do exactly the same is not simply a way to express how Japanese networks function. It is also a skilful means of branding and naming, giving identity and status to individuals and groups working together within the same networks, being part of, and at the same time legitimating, the institution.

In 2004, I visited Koike Shigeko (b. 1920) who had been the assisting leader of the local women's group "Hanabi" since 1991. She explained to me how such groups do have an active role to play both in purely religious contexts and in social matters.

> Before it was most common for women just to have the role of being behind their husbands, serving the priest on his occasional visits. The *fujinkai* is a club for spouses, but in recent years it has changed its name to women's club (*joseibu*) to show that women are not only relating to their husbands. Also non-married women join the groups. As a priest told me, women have much power.

She giggled. Mrs. Shigeko herself lives in a 300 years old family house with a long tradition of *danka* affiliation with the nearby Shinzenji temple, where she has been a caretaker (*yakuin*) for many years, and where her husband is the leader of the local Hanazonokai. The women's club has a small journal, helps at ceremonies at the temple and arranges gatherings of chanting, singing and studying.

> Also when young women move from their hometown to a new place, they don't know how to take care of their ancestors and arrange *obon*. They will learn through the elders. And they will get new networks of people.

Musō Kyokai 無相教会 ("Religious Assembly of [Master] Musō", the whole name being Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Hanazonoryū Musō Kyōkai) is with its 16.113 members (*Hakusho*, 132) the single largest movement among the *kyōka* movements of Hanazonokai. In 1924, a priest's wife in Tokyo made a prayer to realize a wish of spreading religious songs in honor of Kaisan Musō as a missionary means of making effort at deeepening the heart/mind of Zen, and in broader termes to help purifying the heart/minds of people in society. In 1936, the ideas were materialized in the Hanazonoryū Daihi Kyōkai (花園流大悲教会, *daihi* meaning "great compassion") and in 1950 under the name of Hanazonoryū Musōkyōkai it was established as a national movement with local groups under the institutional administration at the *honzan*. The movement is also called a *goeikakai*, which is a general name for Buddhist groups in Japan singing and chanting religious songs and poems (詠歌 *eika* and 和讃 *wasan*). As a religious choir (*eikakai*) in the *honzan* it has its

own *eika* hall (*Eikadō*) or *eika* training hall (*Eika dōjō*). The content of the songs of the *eika* songbooks vary from themes such as praising Musō, Buddha and the patriarchs, to songs on classical scriptures (Hannya Shingyō) institutional doctrines (Shūmon Anjin) and slogans (Seikatsu Shinjō), and to chants directed at stillborn babies (*mizuko*), war deads (*senbotsusha*), and the Seven Gods of Luck (e.g., in *Myōshinji Hanazonoryū Gakubushū* 2000). Some songs are intended for specific ritual occasions (e.g., *higan-e, obon*), and all chants are accompanied by rhythmic strokes of small bells, which are part of the ritual equipment of the members.

Almost all members are elderly women, as are also most of the participants of other religious gatherings, such as dharma talk gatherings.[58] Most are *danka* affiliates, but some have no relationship to Myōshinji at all. Some might have been invited to the group by friends, others join the Musō Kyōkai because their own Buddhist temple have no *eikakai*. Like the Hanazonokai, Musō Kyōkai is organized in regions and local parishes, and like the *hōkai* system of the *sōryō*, there are a series of ranks that one can aspire to aquire through exams and years of practice. There are 13 of such ranks (*han*), the lowest being *hokkyōshi*, the highest called *shihan*, the administrative toppost, *kanchō*, being held by a priest holding a position in the headquarters. In 2004 there were nine of such *shihan* within Myōshinji, seven of these being male priests, the two being priest wives.

I met one of the latter in 2004, Shaku Atsuko at the *honzan* sub-temple Tenshōin, which she had inherited from her father and in which her deceased husband had been the priest. As a child she had experienced the gatherings of the *eikakai*, and later she wanted to join it herself. She did so in 1981, later herself becoming a teacher with the rank of *shihan*. The Musō Kyōkai group of 18 people meets twice a week at the temple to practice. There is also a group of 23 students at Hanazono University called Tenraikai, all male residents at the *zen juku* (see 139). When asked which words she felt could describe her motivation of participating in the *eikakai*, she answered that, apart from effects of ritual virtue (*kudoku*) to herself and others, there was a strong element of feeling peace of mind (*anjin*); "while practicing, one forgets all other

[58] There are almost three times as many women as men in the *hōwakai*, almost none of these being younger than forty (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 200). A chanting assembly (*okyōkai*) in one book is characterized as "just like a mini-*fujinkai*" (*Hakusho*, 84).

things, also oneself, while also enjoying oneself". Two older women, whom I had seen to several Musō Kyōkai occasions, one of whom had been a member for the last 30 years, acknowledged the same motivations. They also assured me that they felt energy and vigor (*genki*), that the ancestors benefited from their chanting, and that former members of the group would also feel joy at hearing them in heaven.

Okagesama Undō (おかげさま運動 "Movement of Thankfulness") is another important project of the Hanazonokai.[59] It is not itself an organization with members, but a "practice movement" (*jissen katsudō*). It is organized and administered at the headquarters, where it has its own office (*Okagesama Undō Suishin Honbu*), and represented at every regional cultivation office (*kyōka honbu*) as an Okagesama Promotion Committee (*Okagesama Suishin Iinkai*). The movement was established in 1973, proposed at a large memorial ceremony for the second patriarch (Enkan Kokushi) the year before to be the biggest spiritual movement (Kimura 1984, 231), The aim of the movement is to work in Japan and abroad for deepening pure faith and gratitude, and for assisting and helping people in need; victims of natural disaters and wars, refugees etc. The philosophy is also expressed by collecting donations at other *kai* and at different ritual and/or institutional events—as when an "alms-gathering campaign" was conducted as an *okagesama takuhatsu* all over the country (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 126). An *okagesama* box is also to be found in temples and ideally also in private Buddha altars, and in the magazine *Shōbōrin* donated amounts are announced. Another campaign within the Okagesama Undō is the "Million People Sutra Copying Assembly", Hyakumannin Shakyōkai. It was established in preparation for the 650th anniversary of the sect founder in 1985, with the aim of praying for world peace, purification of society and achieving cultivation of pure faith (*shinjin*) for a million people, and already in the first year participants had dedicated 6000 copied sutras to the *honzan* (*Hanazono 100 nen*, 105). Since the *Heart Sutra* is the most widely used, it is also called Hannya Shingyō no Shakyōundō (*Hakusho*, 131), the training hall for sutra copying (*shakyō dōjō*) at the honzan opens its doors to participants once a year. Another concrete project within the Okagesama Undō is the Misshōkai. It was established in 1970 as a means of attracting attention to preserving Zen culture in the forms of physical objects such as buildings, paintings and sculptures. As such

[59] On the Okagesama Undō, see Okagesama Undō Suishin Honbu (n.d.).

it can be said to be parallel to the Research Institute for Zen Culture, which is concerned mainly with research and preserving cultural artefacts in the form of the textual culture of Zen. Misshōkai at several occasions collects money for restoration projects and has now become part of the headoffice at the headquarters.

Other kinds of *kai* include local meditation assemblies (*zazenkai*), study and practice assemblies (*kenshūkai*), memorial assemblies (*kuyōkai*), gratitude-for-parents assemblies, dharma talk assemblies (*hōwakai*) and sutra copying assemblies (*shakyōkai*). Some *kai* are locally oriented, while others are more clearly institutionally sanctioned. Assemblies for chanting religious songs (*goeikakai*), women's assemblies (*fujinkai*) and *zazenkai* are the far most widespread activities of temple cultivating practice. Assemblies for youngsters and middle-aged men (*sōnen*) are less popular, Sunday schools (*nichiyō gakkō*), boy- and girl-scout assemblies even less represented at local temples.[60] Dharma talks (法話) are sermons about Buddhist teachings which are often applied to everyday life and concrete worldly affairs. These can be given at special dharma talk assemblies (*hōwakai*, usually also including other activities such as sutra chanting and discussion) arranged through the *honzan* or at the local temples.[61] This form of *kyōka* activity is also suitable for almost all events and activities, from *zazenkai* to celebrating the birth of Śākyamuni Buddha to funerals and memorial services.[62] In terms of formalization, a local *hōwakai* is much more structured than a *kodomokai*, but less formal than a ceremony or assembly at the *honzan*, especially if it is a celebration of a particular event.

The strategy and reality of training and cultivation

Through education and monastic training human beings are symbolically transformed into Buddhas. Through intellectual, physical, social and spiritual maturation temple sons change status from being the offspring of the clergy to becoming priests themselves, and lay persons

---

[60] See almost identical results from three different surveys in *Hakusho*, 36, *Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 184–85 and *Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 69.

[61] The Kyoka Sentā started its own assemblies in 1981, and in 1990 these had been conducted 100 times. After the first three years with less than 10 persons participating, they managed to attract an average of 15–20 attendants each time (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 334).

[62] 20% gives a dharma talk at a funeral and 35% claims to do it sometimes. 36% do so at a Buddhist service (*hōji*), 45% does it sometimes (*Hakusho*, 28–29).

change status and "essence" in becoming part of an institutional family they did not belong to before. As students they are taught intellectual and social skills, that will not only give most of them an academic certificate but also a necessary general education as social beings in a social world. As monks they are taught "unusual" skills, they learn how to live a life as temporary *shukke*, they leave home in order to come back. These qualities underline both traditional Zen and Mahayana values, but are even more stressed as factors necessary in a modern world in which the clergy needs both to be spiritually enlightened and socially accustomed, representing tradition and yet being able to adjust and live in modernity. As a traditional (*kisei*) religion Myōshinji represents Japanese history and the "hometown" feeling (*furusato*), which triggers emotional responses to most Japanese. As such it is deep-rooted in tradition, it has a brand of recognition that no new religion (*shinkō shūkyō*) or new new religion (*shin shin shūkyō*) can compete with. While most of these struggle to find legitimation of origin and tradition, traditional religions and sects in Japan struggle to create the image of also being fit to modernity.

Showing the religious sect to be a modern and living institution is thus also an important element of the general cultivating activities addressed to the laity. Says a guidebook for priests: "if there is no correct understanding of, and sympathy with, the spirit of the time, it is impossible for modern people to accept mission" (*Zau*, 79). When the institution arranges discussion groups, offices or research on contemporary issues (such as "Life coordinate network", いのちの総合ネットワーク, comprising aspects such as human rights, education, medical treatment, welfare, discrimination, international issues, culture and religion, see *Kenkyū hōkoku* 3, 6–308 and *Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 6–168) it is not only a matter of seeing these as challenges on the Buddha way (*genjō kōan*, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 83). It also itself is a strategic signal in a modern society, where image and identity competition not only relates internally between Buddhist sects and different religions, but also externally toward non-religious institutions, movements, ideas and practices caring and competing for the same domains that religions were in charge of, and toward the agents that were "naturally" related to a temple, but who were not necessarily interested in deeper commitment. Although competition from some of the newer religions does threaten the old institutions, outer institutionalized mission from the headquarters toward non-affiliates is hardly ever done except for slogans in general tones of spreading the dharma. I have talked to several priests who in polite

phrases did not hide their antipathy toward for instance Sōka Gakkai (for being too aggressive) or Agonshū (for being too popular), but the institution as such has no official policy toward other religions, and publicly voiced criticism is carefully avoided.[63] The unwritten rule of not proselytizing among other traditional Buddhist sects are in most cases kept to continue status quo and steady relationships, although individual priests and temples do, however, manage to attract new *danka* by offering certain specific services (e.g., *zazenkai, mizoku kuyō*) or by taking part in the often fierce competition of the funeral industry (see 272). Shinto is essentially considered to be a religion belonging to another domain, as a complementary part of an overall religious field in which both are necessary and have different functions and qualities. Although this religious division of labour is not always a positive feature of institutional strategy other religions seem generally to be beyond the domains of sectarian competition. Although Myōshinji does have branch temples abroad, foreign mission also seems not to have high priority, and apart from being within the interest of a few devoted individuals, the establishment of international Zen training halls and temples seem to be as much a strategic sign of domestic "internationalization" (*kokusaika*, which functions as a mantric slogan suggesting quality and open-mindedness), as it is genuinely an attempt to attracts foreigners to Japanese Zen. Rather, institutionalized mission and cultivating activities are primarily addressed to the individuals and families already somehow related to the institution. On the one hand, Myōshinji as a Rinzai Zen sect promotes the image of being a religion for the true ascetic, the *shukke* as the world-transcending, enlightened monk whose spiritual essence justifies the institution as a "high tradition". On the other hand, it also has to be an accessible religion to the masses, in which the arrogance of traditional religious institutions must not be the norm (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 203).

The institution itself has interests in presenting the laity for possibilities of status change and symbolic upward mobility through cultivating activities. To live up to the ideal of being a living religion, or a "religion

[63] A thorough analysis on debates in Buddhist newspapers would probably give a somewhat more nuanced picture. The Aum Shinrikyō incident generated a public and political (and media-created) demand for also institutional voices, leading Myōshinji to establish a research group on this topic. Besides condemning Aum, critique was also directed inwards, asking whether the Aum incident was also a problem related to other religions (See *Rinō ōmu*, 4). In KH 11 (2004) there was a theme on the new and new new religions with descriptions and reports on different groups.

of life" (命の宗教 *inochi no shūkyō*, ibid. 204) rather than a religion of death, a "funeral Buddhism" (*sōshiki bukkyō*), it is crucial for Buddhist temples in the modern age to dispel the *danka*-system (*Zau*, 61), so it apperas not as a "funeral place" (*sōshikijō*), but as a "training hall for the mind and heart" (心の道場 *kokoro no dōjō, Rinō ōmu*, 10), suitable for what has often for the spirit of all Buddhism of the 21'th century been called "era of the mind/heart" (心の時代 *kokoro no jidai*).[64] The family system (*kazoku seidō, Zau*, 63) must change into a system of individual belonging, from filiation to personal affiliation, from an inherited and "genealogical" relation to a chosen commitment. Thus, the *danka* system must be turned into a member system (会員制度 *kaiin seido*), the *danka* as a relic of tradition must be converted into a *shinto* as a living representative of belief (ibid. 64). Missionary, cultivating and educational activities are directed toward the "passive" *danka*-members—for instance young people whose affiliation often is only indirect through their parents or grandparents[65]—and toward those interested in being (called) active believers who cultivate pure faith, and practice more and/or even direct their practice into attempts of arousing satori (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 166). Apart from individual cultivation, an ideal is also to generate consciousness of belonging to interrelated networks of co-existence (*kyōson*), in which gratitude and repaying received favors (*Seishōnen*, 68) is part of the way of making society become a "flower garden" (*hanazono*). Sectarian consciousness (*kyōdan ishiki*) through which individuals share the "same faith and the same practice" (*dōshin dōgyō*) and a "fellow feeling" (*nakama ishiki, Jūshoku oboegaki*, 116) ideally is seen to help unite and identify the individual *danshinto* as members of the institutional family (e.g., *Zau*, 170). Whether actually feeling sectarian commitment or not, the concept of the Zen sect (*zenshū*) to most people seem to be associated with what is Zen.[66]

Ideas of cultivating the laity and transforming them from *danka* to *shinto* are old,[67] but at least not systematically structured until the Meiji

[64] This might be difficult: 58.2% go to the temple because of Buddhist (memorial) services (*hōyō*) rather than ideally coming for receiving the dharma (*Hakusho*, 37).

[65] 53% thinks young people often do come to the temple. In answering to the question why still many do not come, 51% thought this was because the temples have no special approaches in attracting them (*Hakusho*, 30).

[66] 51.3% (*sesshin*), 45.9% (*zazenkai*) and 41.5 % (Musō Kyōkai) thought 'Zen sect' to be one of the most important words associated with Zen.

[67] Hakuin and Bankei are praised for having propagated the dharma for the general populace (*Shingyō kyōten*, 15–16).

times in which they were necessary responses to accusations against the Buddhist clergy and institutions. However, "the idea of modern times has clearly not entered our consciousness" (*Rinō ōmu*, 7) said one priest in a booklet discussing the causes and consequences of the Aum Shinrikyō incident, indicating what seems to be either the result of unsuccessful campaigns or a strategy only partially desired: many temples and temple users still function as if belonging to the *danka* system. Some *danka* are simply not interested in becoming *shinto* but would rather remain affiliated to the temple as families, rather than as individuals—post-modern "spiritualization of religion" need not necessarily be motivating trends for all individuals. In a Myōshinji survey 58.2 % said they were going to the temple primarily because of memorial services rather than for receiving the dharma (*Hakusho*, 37). Also, some of the clergy are not interested in approaching the radical Shin Buddhist idea of "oneness between clergy and laity" (僧俗一体 *sōzoku ittai*). The institution also has an interest in keeping the structure of the group (家 *ie*) in religious relations and *danka*- or *ie*-religiosity also has to be treated carefully without too much public criticism. The institution also is interested in not carrying to excess the reforms (*Zau*, 63): it is not the aim to make laymen believe that they should take over the practice of Zen priests (*zensō*).[68] They shall keep within their boundaries, just as a farmer should put his heart and soul into farming, the labourer should work with all his power to producing at his factory, and the teacher should put his energy into teaching (ibid. 162). Cultivating the priests and the laity on the one hand transcends boundaries, but on the other hand it re-establishes them in making them better representatives of their institutional roles. Rinzai Zen should encourage everyone to make the everyday mind the way itself, and everyday life as it is (*sono mama*) into a Zen life (*Shingyō kyōten*, 21). The clergy must "straighten up their necks" (*Rinō ōmu*, 8) in being dignified priests, and the institution must work for cultivating the general populace (*taishū*)—without going on compromise in keeping the idea of enlightening individuals and transmitting tradition "from face to face" (*Zau*, 158–59).

Education, training and cultivation are very important parts of contemporary Zen Buddhism. Not all agents within the institution agree

[68] A Myōshinji priest, in conjunction with a study-at-home company, offered lay-priest (*zaike-sōryō*) programs for lay people wanting priestly rank but without going monastic; he was defrocked, and the ranks acquired at such courses are not recognized by established sects (Covell 2005, 88).

upon how, and to which extent these are to be applied, nor on which role they should have. In the next chapter these aspects will be further exemplified and discussed in analysing rituals, some of which are only partly within the frameworks of institutionally defined practice.

3.4 Monastic Practice

Ritualized monastic life

> I had to sit two days in front of the *sōdō* entrance, and then three days inside in a small room. Only sitting, that was all, no talking to anybody, no movment with the body. It was tough. I had never had such an experience before. My mind [*kimochi*] was hunted down [*oitsumerarete shimatta*].

Yano Sōkin in 2004 had been a monk in the Empukuji *sōdō* for seven years. Born in a lay family, he got interested in Buddhism and Zen by listening to Buddhist priests and reading books about it. After graduating in marketing at the Meiji Univerisity in Tokyo, he took the precept ceremony at the age of 24, and entered a different *dōjō* before his permanent stay in the training hall close to Kyoto (see also 239). His entrance into monastic life followed the standard procedure of the Zen tradition.

No candidates are left in doubt that they are to enter a hard, strict, and very different life, even for those coming from temple families. On his ritual journey of leaving home (*angya*), dressed in a bamboo hat (*ajirogasa*), leggings (*kyahan*), white socks (*shirotabi*), straw sandals (*waraji*), and carrying a two-piece pack (*kesa bunko*), the applicant will bring an application for admission (*katō gansho*), a written pledge (*seiyakusho*),[69] and a document containing personal history. He will show his motivation through participating in the ritually dramatized refusal and admission by asking in front of the *sōdō*: "I beg your favor" (*tanomimashō*). This will be responded to by a senior monk and later the chief administrator (*shika*) with harsh shouts ("return home, we have no food for you!") or even by being physically kicked out of the temple precincts. Showing his determination and endurance in sitting motionless on his knees, with his head bowed and hands folded on his *kesa* box in front of the entrance throughout the day, he will finally be admitted inside for a sparse meal and a thin *tatami* mat on which to sleep for the night. This

[69] The standard prescribed forms can be seen in *Zendō Guide Book*, 14–15.

procedure, *niwazume* (庭詰 "occupying the courtyard") is repeated the following day, after which he will have to spend five days—in other sects it is less—in a small guest room (*tanga-ryō*), doing nothing but sitting in full lotus position meditating while facing the wall, a practice called *tanga-zume* (旦過詰 "occupying the guest room"). This painful period is a pragmatic exercise in testing whether the applicant is actually fit and motivated to enter monastic life—some do take the consequences of losing face by leaving or escaping.[70] But it is also a ritual performance, itself a ritual enactment of Bodhidharma's "wall contemplation" and Eka's staunch insistence on becoming his disciple, in which the aspirant by his endurance accepts the procedure of transgressing the social and conceptual boundary, and commits himself to the institutional order. This is further affirmed in the following rites of greeting the head monk and the master, and the gradual socialization and assignment of space, rank, and rules.[71]

Having entered monastic life, the monk's personal appearance is symbolically changed. He will use his Buddhist name, wear black robes (indicating low rank), be tonsured periodically, and generally learn how to be an individual part of the monastic group. He will be part of a new religious family reaching back to Buddha and the patriarchs but also forward to the present strict and fatherly Zen master, his dharma uncles and dharma brothers, with whom he will be living during the time of training (*hōrō*). This monastic kinship will follow him also after returning to social life (*seiju*). He will feel a dept of gratitude (*hō-on*) to his master, and his fellow monks will be part of the dharma relationship (*hōrui*) in which he will find himself as an agent and symbol.

Hierarchy is of utmost importance. The relations between the older (*sempai*) and the younger (*kōhai*)—in terms of age, experience, and rank—is even more rigid in Zen monasteries. All monks have status according to length of stay; the novice is called a *shintō*, the

[70] Leaving is a defeat to both the applicant and to his family who expect their son to undergo the training. He might try again at another monastery, but he will have to go through the same procedure. Even having gone through the entrance rituals, monastic life can be tough, especially to those not so psychologically strong. I was even told about incidences of not so mentally stable people ending up in mental hospitals after having lived in the training hall.

[71] Though it is said that there are no specific rituals expressing and effectuating the entrance into the training hall, entrance is a highly ritualized series of practices. *Angya*, *niwazume*, *tangazume*, meeting the master, etc. are classified as *nyūmon* (入門, "entering the gate") in the Japanese edition of *Unsui: A Diary of Zen Monastic Life* (Satō 1982).

seniors *kōtan*, etc. The young monk must follow the instructions of his superiors and show no sign of disapproval of the functioning power relations—especially, of course, toward the Zen master.[72] Monks, regardless of background, will have to be placed in the monastic *habitus*, which functions by hierarchy and pecking order, by ranks and roles, the modes within which each individual, according to the time spent in the training hall, can progress. Personal authority thus accumulates in time; each *kōhai* will become a *sempai*, and each monk can aspire to become director (*hyōseki*), head monk (*jikijitsu*), holy monk's attendant (*shōji*), chief administrator (*shika*), business manager (*fūsu*), cook (*tenzo*), vegetable gardener (*enzu*), hall manager (*densu*), master's attendant (*inji*), etc. Authority might also be exercised psychologically and even physically[73] between the monks, though it is hardly ever voiced from within the system. On the contrary, I have often heard of how hard (*kibishii*), but also how mentally and emotionally deep, monastic experience was and how it turned out to have positive effects on later life. Such experiences are also popular subjects of books, speeches, and interviews for newspapers or television programs, fitting well the Japanese *gambaru* ("fight") culture of enduring suffering and submitting to hierarchical relationships for the benefit of the group.

"All were scolded at different times, often without knowing the reason," a nun who stayed in a Myōshinji sōdō once told me. "We were told to throw everything away." *Sōdō* life is probably the only occasion upon which the young Japanese experience hard discipline and renouncement. This is also true for Myōshinji, the training hall of which is sometimes called a "devil's monastery" (*onizōrin*). Bound by precepts and monastic rules, eating sparse and traditional Buddhist food,[74] renouncing alcohol,

---

[72] It has caused some problems when Westerners have been introduced to this hierarchical system, but even the most democratically and liberally minded person in the long run will have to settle with the system if he wants to progress within it. ("For those who thought Zen justified rebellion against society, this is not good news," Hori 1994, 31). Selfishness is a Buddhist evil, and the "putting of the self above the hierarchical ordering of group relations... [is] the fundamental ritual pollution, the self out of place" (Fitzgerald 1993, 338). It is also seen as a social mutiny, a taking part in a symbolic power play in which one has not progressed to be capable of joining.

[73] One way to do this is to use the stick (*keisaku*) as a means of power manifestation. I have heard stories—though not specifically from Myōshinji—of monks being hit very hard, one even had his back broken (this incidence was from Eiheiji of the Sōtō sect). Victor Hori, a former Rinzai monk, found no such abuse of power (1994, 23n).

[74] A known economist once said: "The meals in prison are much better than in the monastery" (quoted in Nishimura 1974, 6). In a television program on Eiheiji the interviewer made a big drama out of what he thought was extremely poor food conditions,

sex, and cigarettes are only some of the many strict rules and codes a monk will have to adjust to. And Zen monasteries have many strictly defined rules,[75] with norms of how and where to sit, how and what to chant, how to address superiors, how to circumambulate clockwise around the image of Manjushri (Monju Bosatsu), and how not to break the codes of purity (by, for instance, touching with the feet the edge of the platform within the meditation hall or by breaking the silence of the meditation hall, the dining hall, or the bathroom). Outsiders are struck by the seemingly minute regulation of all activities—though it is often said that it is much less rigid than in the Sōtō monasteries.[76] Monastic life might be tough, but after all, under fairly reasonable conditions with food, "family," friends, chores, and a somewhat meaningful life—for most of the monks, lasting only about a year.

Regulations are embodied in constructions of time and space, which themselves function as frameworks and boundaries of Zen training. On the one hand, time and space are ideally to be perceived as holistic and homogenous. "Zen" is to be practiced in all activities as "extended practice" in a utopian time/space in which all is interrelated, in which everything is embodied and yet transcended, as is the ideal of the "whole" Zen person expressing enlightened Buddha nature by simply "walking, standing, sitting, and lying" (行住坐臥 *gyōjūzaga, Jūshoku oboegaki*, 75). Everything is sacred—or vice versa: everything is profane—expressed in the Chan/Zen slogan "the everyday-mind is the way."[77] Also, "both the formal and the informal life of the monastery are thought to be equally important arenas of Zen practice," the informal being the "complement of the formal" (Hori 1994, 25). Time and space are totalized as what Dōgen called a "being-time" (有時 *uji*), with the kōan extended to an "actualized kōan" (現成公案, *genjō kōan*),

---

worrying whether the monks could survive without meat—this was not a critique, but rather an idealization using the image of a tough life to make a journalistic story.

[75] Baizhang Huaihai is usually given credit for establishing the first monastic Chan codes, but the origins of the *sōdō* are "as obscure as the origins of the Ch'an sect" (Collcutt 1981, 207). Legendary accounts on how preinstitutionalized Chan monks wandered from place to place, meditating outdoors or using the facilities of other institutionalized sects may not be historically correct, but they do give substantial weight to the ideals of the lonely wandering *unsui* ("cloud, water").

[76] "We do not really care about such nonsense," said one former Rinzai monk on my questioning of the seemingly less—compared to Sōtō Zen—ritualized acts of going to the toilet.

[77] *Heijōshin-kore-do*, Zhaozhou's answer to the question "what is the essence of Buddhism?" (*Shingyō kyōten*, 21).

and as what Hakuin meant by stating that true meditation is making everything into one single kōan.[78] Monastic life is ideally in an eternal "moment in and out of time" (Turner 1989, 96), the monastery being a durational "enchanted garden" (Faure 1993, 187) transforming "the transient human existence, with its trail of sufferings, into the cyclical and ultimately stationary time of ritual" (ibid. 192). Time and space is flowing and as such disappearing.

On the other hand, time and space necessarily also have to be heterogenous. Ritualization is *also* manifested in punctual events in a "digitalized" divided monastic world. Although everyday activities are themselves the acts of a Buddha, and although ideally form (*sugata*) itself is the Buddha form, in real life there are necessarily training rules (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 75) to punctually guide correct being and doing. Domains are compartmentalized, the sacred is graded and demarcated into time and space zones, divisions often manifested with sounds (bells, drums, sticks, shouts) and signs (signboards, gestures). Although it is said that there is training all year, monastic time is divided into temporal units consisting of training periods (制中 *seichū*) and interim periods (制間 *seikan*), each of which are part of the summer session (夏制 *kasei*)—the "rain retreat" (雨安居 *uango*) lasting from February to July—and the winter session (冬制 *tōsei*) with the "snow retreat" (雪安居 *setsu ango*) lasting from August to January. During the actual training seasons (from the 15th of April until the first of August and from the 15th of October until the first of February) the monks are bound by monastic rules and are not supposed to leave the hall. In the "off seasons" (the remaining days in the periods from February to July and again from August to October) the monks may go back to their families, or, as was more common in the past, on pilgrimage to other temples. But also in the training seasons there are occasions on which certain breaks of the regulations are accepted, and certain days or times are accepted for relaxation or even partying.[79] Such "liminal" atmosphere functions not only as a manifestation of the well-known Chan/Zen

[78] "What is this true meditation? It is to make everything: coughing, swallowing, waving the arms, motion, stillness, words, action, the evil and the good, prosperity and shame, gain and loss, right and wrong into one single koan" (Yampolsky 1971, 58). Foulk (2000, 26) is critical of readings suggesting the idea that "anything can serve as a kōan," which he finds to be a modern construct.

[79] E.g., on the night of winter solstice, after *sesshin* and *takuhatsu*, during *obon*, after the end of the training seasons. There are even special terms for relaxation days (*josaku*, Satō 1973, 68), "escape at night" (*hōkō*, ibid. 96) and drinking alcohol (*sarei*,

(rhetoric of) wildness, nor as carnivalesque anarchy. On the contrary, such behavior is institutionalized antistructure, intervals functioning as digitalized events breaking and yet upholding a regulated whole.

In another way too, events generate meaning and order time. Ritually marked periodical occasions—daily, yearly, etc.—are more densely ritualized events in which the monastic world shapes the training of the monks. Some events are divided in time (e.g., days for alms-begging, attending lectures, cleaning, shaving, repenting), and others are stretched out in time (like the weeklong *rōhatsu sesshin* or the ideal all-time-Zen). These two models (time/space as homogeneous or heterogeneous) are in a dialectical relationship, oscillating between practice as events and as totalized practice, between utopian unity/transcendence and "real" diversity/hierarchy. In leaving the *sōdō*, the *sōryo* (being symbolically both human and Buddha) should bring both models along, seeing (and acting upon) life as such, being sacred (and ritualized) while also acknowledging the necessity of time/space to be broken up in sequences of sacred/nonsacred, ritual/nonritual events.

Within the monastery the construction of ritualized time and space is part of regulating the training. Rules, regulations, codes, and unspoken paradigms are embodied in daily training. In describing the formalized monastic training, Victor Hori talks about "teaching without teaching," communicating and learning through ritual formalism, imitation, and repetition (1994). Rote learning is one such way of acquiring insight ("ritual formalism leads to mystical insight," 31) and learning the *habitus* of monastic life. Sequences of conduct, language, and ritual codes are observed, trained, and reenacted as a way of learning tradition, formalization being a way of expressing the correct life of a true Zen monk.

This double-sided way of ritualization being both means of learning and performing in the same process of training is perhaps best expressed in kōan (公案 "public document") meditation.[80] Each monk is given kōan in succession, ideally in order to complete the whole kōan curriculum of the particular monastery,[81] but in reality only completed

"tea ceremony," Hori 1994, 23)—the latter also being an accepted part of dining when visiting *danka*'s homes during *takuhatsu* or periodic sutra-chanting.

[80] On kōan, see Hori 2003, Heine and Wright 2000, Faure 1993, 211–16, and Stephenson 2005.

[81] Not all Rinzai monasteries follow the same curriculum, nor do the different Zen masters give (or allow) the same amount of time to each kōan. In Korea the monks

by the absolute minority, the majority penetrating only a few "in order to qualify for the status of *jūshoku*" (Hori 2003, 6). Although Rinzai kōan practice is often described as a riddle or a psychological method, Hori, who had many years of Rinzai monastic experience prior to his academic career, maintains that "Rinzai kōan practice is religious in nature" (ibid. 5). As a kind of *dharani* (Faure 1996, 216) the kōan is not meant to be (only) intellectually understood or metaphorically decoded. It must be meditated upon and embodied during all monastic activities and chores (working, gardening, cleaning, cooking, eating, alms-begging, and of course during *zazen*). Kōan practice is a long process of individual struggle, in which the monks will ideally experience the "ball of doubt" (大疑團 *daigidan*) and perhaps even what Hakuin termed "Zen sickness" (禅病 *zenbyō*) and the "Great Death" (大死一番 *daishi ichiban*) before ideally melting together with the kōan, being spiritually and institutionally reborn. It is also a ritual process involving the master, who is said to function as a mirror or a midwife dragging out the wisdom and spiritual maturity from the monks. The master will guide each individual through his ritual performance at *sanzen* (参禅),[82] during which he will approve or disapprove of the response to the kōan, which the monk must come up with. As each kōan is said to have only one correct response, the monk will try out several ways of hitting the point, from intellectual answers to shouting, silence, gestures, movements, and more or less dramatic performances like riding on the master's back (Nishimura 1974, 8). One master of a Rinzai monastery told me of a monk who stood up and pushed him backward so he ended up in the adjoining room. Rules were since changed: the *rōshi* is not to be touched during *sanzen*. Behavior also changes in other ways. Said one priest and former monk at Daitokuji: "We don't shout so much anymore."

The master will give him extra "peripheral cases" (*sassho*) to ensure that the responses are not just parrot answers imitated from books or fellow monks, and as final manifestation of having penetrated the kōan the monk must poetically reaffirm his insight by applying a "capping phrase" (*jakugo*) taken from a collection of classical Chinese verses,

---

keep the same "critical phrase" (*watō*) of the kōan throughout their careers (Buswell 1992, 158).

[82] *Sanzen* is the consultation in the master's room, sometimes called *dokusan* (独参), which is optional, or *sōsan*, which is compulsory (See Mohr 2000, 268 n14).

phrases, and poems.[83] In 1917 the unknown author with the pseudonym Hauhōō had his book *Gendai Sōjizen Hyōron* (*A Critique of Present-day Pseudo-Zen*, 1933) published, revealing the kōan as well as their "answers" in his apparent disgust for, and attack on, what he found to be contemporary pseudo-Zen. Yoel Hoffmann, who translated it into English (1978), found only a photo-copy of it in a shop specializing in Buddhist literature, the owner claiming that "almost all the buyers of the book are Zen novices" (ibid. 39). Although Hoffmann seems to suggest that the book itself is only read and transmitted in secrecy by an initiated elite—I have also heard stories of Myōshinji buying the complete stock of copies to burn—I found an edition at the Hanazono Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho (which was not hidden), and a few masters and priests, whom I questioned about the book, seemed quite relaxed about its possible circulation among monks: only insecure monks, who would be "unmasked" anyhow, would use it, I was assured.

Mystifying kōan meditation (*kanna zen*) as an esoteric inexpressible art for super-monks transcending worldly categories contributes to the "epistemological oversight" (Faure 1993) of Western enthusiasts—but is also a strategic "skillful means" of the institution, disclosing and yet "wrapping" monastic practice as true Zen. The "spontaneity" of the kōan responses, praised by Zen apologetics and Western psychologized interpretations, are highly ritualized and yet personified. No doubt the trainee will achieve (mentally and bodily) insight through meditation, some of which is also acquired through his intellectual learning at university and by hearing dharma lectures (*teishō*) from the master on some of the kōan collections.[84] Kōan practice is, however, foremost a ritual participation in a certain genre of which mastery is "a set of literary and rhetorical skills that take many years to acquire" (Foulk 2000, 42), a "bipolar interaction [. . .] like learning how to dance or an imitation onto lovemaking" (McRae 2004, 98). As an "art of speaking" (Faure 1993, 216) it is a kind of training involving rote learning but also accumulated abilities to freely move within the discourses and ritual formalizations contextualizing and producing both the semantic content

[83] On *sassho*, see Mohr 2000, 268 n17. On the Zen phrase book (*Zenrin Kushū*), see Hori 1999.

[84] "Literary expertise" and "a solid grounding in Mahayana sutra and commentarial literature and a knowledge of the Confucian classics are highly desirable qualifications" (Foulk 2000, 42).

of the kōans and the ritual frameworks of institutionally acknowledging the status of mastering them. Kōan practice is a "litmus test for deciding who has satori (understanding) and who does not" (Foulk 2000, 39), but it is also a parameter with which to judge the less digitalized scale of institutional and personal maturation. One Zen master told me that judging a disciple's mind (and whether he has been enlightened or not) also is done by comparing with his daily life in the monastery (Borup 1998, 65–67). The "dharma battle" during *sanzen* is a performative power play, an examination in which the master can show his authority and wisdom, and the trainee can show his maturity and performance abilities. The diligent monk will acquire the "mind" of the master, and through many years of mental and bodily training and performance he will experience the depth of tradition. But he will eventually also develop his own personality through mastering the rituals, the kōan, the genres and written or unwritten codes of monastic *habitus*. Education and training will produce individuals who themselves will carry the tradition and the "enlightened mind," who will become teachers and masters educating and training later generations of monks. The Zen master (*shike*) at Empukuji explained the value of keeping classical texts alive and practicing in the same formal manner in this way:

> It is just like the music of Beethoven. You might want to change it into new compositions, but the experience of the original will change even if you change one single tune. On the other hand, even today listening to Beethoven's music gives an authentic experience, just like practicing *kōan* meditation can give the practitioner the meaning and experience of Hakuin's own experience.

The majority, however, who only stay a short time in the *sōdō* and who will have only few occasional and short encounters with the *rōshi*, will enjoy some, but not the full benefit of, ritualized training. They will achieve insight and experience to a certain extent, enough to acquire institutional rank and the certificate (*shikaku*) to function as a priest.

Apart from being a meditational practice in a series of rites of passage, kōan practice does have an effect on many practitioners outside the ceremonial *sanzen* occasion. Some former monks keep practicing their kōan meditation under the same master, and others use the technique or spiritual mentality in other spheres of life. "Kōan practice helps seeing things in a different perspective," a young monk explained to me. "By using the method of solving the kōan on other daily problems in life, they might find a solution." A priest told me how he still thought

of daily chores such as bringing water from the well, rinsing bowls, or doing garden work with kōan-solving mentality as a challenge to be met with a clear mind. Such ways of extending the kōan practice (see 164), he told me, was not, however, always ideal or possible when living a social life with family, friends, and *danka* to communicate with.

Alms-begging and exchange

Takuhatsu (托鉢), "religious mendicancy," alms-begging or alms-gathering, is another typical and important monastic practice. It is both a spiritual exercise for the monk in training as well as a "rite of exchange" (Bell 1997, 108)—or, since it involves extended time horizons, a ritual complex of exchange—bridging monastic and lay society.

Dressed in black robes, bamboo hats, and straw sandals and carrying a bag (*kanbanbukuro*) for donations, monks walk out of the main gate, splitting into three groups. Walking in line, they chant "*hooo*" ("dharma") to signal their approaching. They split again, each taking "his" alley of the predetermined routes within the city, appearing in the early morning in front of the houses out of which mostly elder women come to take part in the ritual. The giver bows and puts an envelope containing money into the bag, and the monk bows; none of them talk or show any affections. Had it been in the countryside the gifts might have been vegetables or rice, but rules of conduct are the same for all Rinzai Zen monks.[85]

Takuhatsu is the Japanese Zen Buddhist equivalent to the southern Buddhist *pindapāta*, alms-round, which one can see in all Theravada Buddhist Asia. Mendicancy is a living expression of the religious community of the earliest wandering (Chan) Buddhist monks.[86] Just

[85] See the rules for alms-gathering in *Zendō Guide Book*, 38–39. In Myōshinji, *sōdō* time is divided into ten-day periods in which the first, third, sixth, and eighth days are for alms-gathering (ibid. 38). Monks must apply for and receive an alms gathering license, which they will lose if breaking the rules. These include conforming to the general standards of conduct and etiquette of the monastery, not being a hindrance to the flow of public traffic, not imprudently approaching people's homes, and not importuning the donors (ibid. 38–39). Some monks expressed to me that they hoped the dogs would also keep a high standard of etiquette without barking and biting.

[86] Peter Harvey suggests that the earliest Buddhist sangha was a group of wandering *samana*s, ascetics outside, or in the margins, of social life and institutionalized religion (1990, 73). Martin Collcutt also considers early Chan monks to have been "mendicants or members of isolated communities of like-minded meditating monks" (1981, 137). Rules and conduct differ somewhat from other Buddhist sects. Tendai priests from Hiei-zan, for instance, are often seen individually at street corners in Kyoto and other

as *zazen* is a paradigmatic religious practice in all Zen Buddhism, so has *takuhatsu* this archetypal role of being a symbol of "true Zen" and "true Buddhist spirit"—for the institution, for the monks wandering in the streets, and for the almsgivers waiting for the monks to give and be given the objects of exchange, in spite of it being exclusively a practice restricted to the relatively few areas in which Zen monasteries are situated and/or monks are going on their alms-rounds.

Fuse (布施, Sanskr. *dāna*) is the act of giving mostly associated with alms-giving, and for most Buddhists it is seen as a merit-giving auspicious action.[87] For a Theravada Buddhist, living on alms-giving is one of the twelve practices (*dhuta*) aimed at removing all obstacles and forms of attachment, and a Mahayana Buddhist would ideally see it as one of the six *pāramitā* of a Bodhisattva, or even as one of the four ways of leading sentient beings to emancipation (*shishōbō*). *Takuhatsu* is seen as a spiritual exercise, a way to practice and express Zen ideals of humility, no-mind, and the art of ritual exchange without thinking of the exchange itself. For the monks mendicancy is a new and often difficult religious practice. Most come directly from university and a life where most material things are taken more or less as given. The act of humbling oneself to go begging in the streets is a barrier that many monks see as hard to cross, indeed a real "gateless barrier" to enter. As one young monk in a training hall told me, he felt it embarrassing (*hazukashii*) to receive things from strangers without requesting or thanking—indeed, an unusual way of communicating in a culture idealizing and ritualizing the art of exchanging gifts (see below).

This ideal structure of and idea behind the "spiritual" mendicancy can be seen and heard in different variations in many interpretations throughout the Buddhist world. D. T. Suzuki interpreted it as a twofold moral practice: "The one is to teach the beggar humility and the other is to make the donor accumulate the merit of self-denial"

cities in the Kansai area. In southern Buddhist countries alms-gathering includes all monks walking in line.

[87] The respondents to my surveys, however, did not consider *fuse* (the Buddhist gift) to be very meritorious. Only 23% (*sesshin*), 25% (*zazenkai*) and 19.5% (Musō Kyōkai) thought it to be among the three most meritorious of the listed practices or concepts. Since I presume that most of these associate *fuse* with alms-giving or temple-donations (and not payment for ritual services), I also assume the low ratings to be due to the fact that only a minority has ever met alms-begging monks from the relatively few Zen monasteries throughout the country. *Takuhatsu* is an important ritual practice and religious symbol, but too peripheral for the majority—which is also why it is only treated peripherally in the *kyōka* materials for the laity.

(1994, 23), and Satō calls it the perfection of benefiting both self and others (*jiririta enman*, 1982, 54). In a booklet for priest wives, giving is explained as the first and most important *pāramitā* the importance of which is not in the act of exchanging and expecting objects. Instead of this egoistic attitude, giving is seen as a purifying practice, where attachment is discarded and the authentic enlightenment will be part of one's existence (*Zen Q & A*, 100–101). Abbot of the Rinzai branch Tenryūji in Kyoto, Hirata Seikō, elaborates:

> The spiritual foundation of mendicancy is in the almsgiving. Almsgiving is counted as being one of the so-called *paramita*, six forms of practice for those in the enlightened world. It is the teaching of the difficult spirit of giving and being given. There are three forms of almsgiving; alms of material goods, alms of dharma and alms of fearlessness. If any one of these are missing it cannot be called true almsgiving. Alms of material goods is when people give material goods to the monks. Dharma alm is, when the monks give people the Buddha dharma through which one achieves the dharma courage of fearlessness. This is called the alms of giving fearlessness. During almsgiving it is necessary to be conscious about the fact that everything—both the almsgiver, the monk who is receiving and the given material goods—is fundamentally empty. To give and be given is the self-consciousness that both the monks, the layman and the goods are all emptiness (1967, 181).

Hirata here expresses the ideal of the pure threefold circle of donation (三輪相 *sanrinsō*), which "explains the non-substantiality and non-individuality of the giver, the receiver, and the gift" (*Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary*, 257). The ideal ontological and mental state of emptiness is set up as constituting the very ritual, undermining any ideas or practices of being realized from egoistic, material, or instrumental reasons. The giver is to ignore or downplay the essential attribute and quality of which he or she is identified—having the role as the giver—just as the receiver is not to be conscious of his role of being the receiving part of the exchange. Both parts are to behave and think humbly, not thinking of subject, object, exchange, or benefits—the attitude ideally shown when bowing in silence. The exchange is not based on calculating reciprocity but should consist of a "pure" gift, "the completely disinterested gift, the gift given purely out of generosity and altruism, the gift given with no expectation of return of any kind" (Ohnuma 2005, 111). There are ideally no persons or institutions but only pure action, "the gift must 'happen' below the plane of phenomenality, too low for the radar of conscious intentionality" (Caputo 1997, 163). Mendicancy as a form of ritual is thus ideally seen as a soteriological

process involving both parties, who ideally "transcend" and symbolically "sacrifice" themselves with no instrumental intentions of being repaid. It is also in this sense that *takuhatsu*, when taught and practiced at some *zazenkai*, is a form of cultivating activities, based on monastic practice and part of a process of propagating the dharma to the general populace as if all agents were potentially Buddhas. Like the kōan ideally solving itself through a focused non-ego, the pure gift is ideally exchanging itself through detached participants.

Despite the focus on the theological ideal of *takuhatsu*, one should not ignore that there is (as Tambiah said about Thai Buddhism) "a discrepancy, or rather a difference in emphasis, between the ethic of gift giving in Buddhism and the sociology of gift giving" (1970, 213). It has always in the Buddhist world been part of a ritual gift exchange, and a necessary social arrangement, to keep up the social bonds between the monastic and the lay community, both being givers and receivers of a necessary transaction of material goods and spiritual, magical, and soteriological power. Giving food, clothes, medicine, and other necessary items[88] to monks in exchange for receiving the gift of dharma and, perhaps more realistically, of acquiring merit, is seen as an equal exchange of gifts, both parties having crucial interests in the exchanged "objects" as well as the relationships behind the transactions. The ritual exchange between monk and lay agent, who are both givers and receivers, can be said to be of an equal level. Both give and receive religious or material gifts that are correspondingly of equal value. "A gift invites a gift in return, and giving is contagious" (Gernet 1995, 214).

With the introduction of the Baizhang monastic code, the act of giving (and receiving) and thus also the role of the alms-round, were given new frames of significance within the Chan communities. This code and the motto of "a day without work is a day without food" prescribed monastic ideals of economic self-sufficiency, perhaps originally being a response to Confucian accusations of monks being social parasites. In Japan, in the wake of the Meiji restoration, certain prefectural governments in the name of anti-Buddhist modernity passed a law banning the practice of mendicancy that "deprived the training monasteries of their means of livelihood" (Katō 1998, 157). Contemporary Japanese

[88] Spiro some decades ago (but I doubt if the number is significantly different today) estimated that people in upper Burma spent between 25% and 40% of their income on *dāna* (1982, 456–59). This is definitely very different from Japanese conditions.

Zen monks working in the monastic vegetable garden do so primarily as a ritual training. Donations received at *takuhatsu* are also primarily symbolic and of a different order in which monks and lay people perform their institutional roles. *Takuhatsu* does, however, contribute to the economy of the monastery. Monks do come home with significant amounts of money on their weekly rounds,[89] and they can even be "hired" to do ritual services for the *danka*, requesting sutra reading from the monks (a practice called *tanagyō*, "sutras before the ancestors altar," or *shūmai* 集米, "gathering rice")—the latter of which can actually be a rather significant income also for the young monks in training, who do not have many opportunities to spend money in the training periods. In countryside monasteries, rice and vegetables are still objects of donations, often providing the monks with sufficient amounts of ingredients to supply their own food.

To some modern Japanese, donating money is only justified if it goes to concrete projects, like restoring old temple buildings. Some might find that laypersons giving material goods are exploited in giving a lot more than they receive, their "return gifts" even being of a nonempirical and noncontrollable nature. On the other hand, it could be argued that their gifts do not correspond to the dharma and merit-gifts of the monks, the contribution to the exchange being qualitatively underrepresented. This means that donations and repayment are to be given at other occasions, involving other kinds of gifts. Money payments in forms of either payment for concrete services (e.g., memorial services) or donations with no apparent received service defining the amount are important means of income for individual temples and the monasteries in which the monks live. Everything has a price, and if, for instance, a building needs to be repaired, the costs might be announced in order to attract donations from potential givers. At one level, exchange is consciously thought of as such—monks, priests, and lay people know the expectations from the other part. On another level, the ritual exchange runs a complementary game of a different order. Pierre Bourdieu calls the apparent denial of (political and economical) interest practice for "misrecognition" (e.g., 1994, 181–83). Power relations and strategies are "misrecognized" by the agents participating in a game "wrapped" in

[89] Five groups doing *takuhatsu* three or four times a month, and a group of three persons each typically gathering 7,000 to 10,000 yen does make up a fair amount of money to the monastery.

euphemization and symbolic layers of another order. Thus in this field all transactions are called by a different name, and although donations (as opposed to payments) are tax-exempted, even set prices—entrance fees to famous temples, courses at monasteries, reciting sutras in front of the *butsudan*—are termed and regarded as donations in order to hide and "wrap" the ritual and social game going on beneath the formal and superficial practice. "Give as you please" is a Buddhist mantra all over the world, leaving the giver (especially if not accustomed to the local structure and implied price list) in a precarious situation. In Japan donations are to be wrapped in envelopes without writing one's name on them, but yet containing stamps, signs, or sentences of gratitude that reveal the identity of the giver. Donations and dharma are of a much more respectable level of terminology than is price and personal interest. The transaction is thus also characterized by what Bourdieu calls "symbolic alchemy" (1994, 185–89). Interest-relations are converted into "cosmic" relations, personal (and "instrumental") interests are linguistically transformed into altruistic and soteriological motives.

But also the opposite transformation of meaning levels is true. Economic transactions are wrapped in religious discourse, but religious sentiments and institutional power relations are also wrapped in "market rationality." By sponsoring a religious group in a world with competition from both many other religious groups and secularization, the giving laity has a certain control and power over the (materially) receiving clerical world. And by giving a gift that cannot be repaid, the monks, through *takuhatsu* and the general performance of symbolically representing the institution and the other world, are in a position of controlling the exchange relationship. The impossibility of giving and receiving with a "no-mind"—the idea of the "pure gift"—is not only a threat to the circular economy and the social reciprocal interrelation. It is also an ideal, a way of giving that cannot be realized, and as such it is an extended version of the idea of the ideal gift that cannot be repaid: the receiver will always be in an indebted relation in which the repaying of gratitude (*hō-on*) to both the monastic world and what it represents will always only be humble part-payment. The clergy and the monks naturally have an interest in convincing the lay givers of the importance and the indeterminate value of the gift (and the correct way of giving and receiving). To keep the dharma and the exchange circulating, the lay givers can repay their debt with institutional commitment, which apart from the cash is an important kind of "symbolic capital." *Takuhatsu* as a kind of *kyōka* (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 217) is both a

way of giving religious education as well as a way of strategically doing missionary efforts in creating and maintaining bonds and continuous flow between givers and receivers. (See 239 for an illustrative example of *takuhatsu* as part of a reciprocal ritual complex.)

Marshall Sahlins (1972, 188–89) distinguishes between reciprocity as "a *between* relation, the action and reaction between two parties" and redistribution as "socially a *within* relation, the collective action of a group." Reciprocity is two parties exchanging goods with one another, and in redistribution "goods are funneled through a central point in order to be shared by members of the entire group" (Alles 2000, 117)—corresponding to what Alles calls respectively specialized exchange and generalized exchange (ibid. 121–22). *Takuhatsu* is both a reciprocal exchange between individuals (monk and layperson) and a redistribution in which everyone gives and receives. The latter is not only true in the cases where alms-gathering has been used to collect money or material things to underprivileged groups of people.[90] It is also part of the living tradition in making the temple a "field of merit" to which individuals can contribute by sowing and cultivating and from which they can benefit by harvesting. As an opposite situation of another Buddhist practice of eliminating karmic retribution by blurring the origin of evil acts (Harvey 1990, 201), the temple and the whole religious institution as a public field of merit—a *hanazono*—is both the channel of direct and personal investment, and the container of a common power of principally inexhaustible accumulated and circulating merit open to all, notwithstanding identification of "who invested what." Charity and altruism is also instrumental, just like individual, strategic rituals also become beneficial to others. Giving and receiving is the paramount activity and the quintessence of the institutional relationship between monks and laypersons, revealing and suggesting power relations and interrelational exchange.

3.5 Ritualized Events; Clerical Rites of Passage

Monasticism is itself a way of life. But especially in modern Japan it functions to most monastic inhabitants as an extended phase of a larger institutionalized ritual process. Seen in this perspective the monastic

[90] An example of such *zazenkai* alms-round for worn-out clothes ("*boro takuhatsu*") to be contributed to a recuperation place for leprosy patients can be seen in *Hakusho*, 60.

sphere is only a phase of a ritual complex necessitating other rites of passage lying before and after the *sōdō* period.[91]

Ordaining the monk

The ordination ritual by its name suggests transformation. *Tokudo shiki* 得度式 means the ritual (式 *shiki*) of crossing over (度 *do*) to attain (得 *toku*) enlightenment, also being referred to as "leaving home to cross over to attain" (出家得度 *shukke tokudo*), or "entering the way" (入道 *nyūdō*). It is the "ritual of being tonsured, receiving the precepts, entering the Buddha way and becoming a *shukke*" (*Kyōka biyō*, 99).[92]

The ritual starts the night before with a bath of purification, which is repeated in the morning. The novice wears a white dress (*byaku-e*) to signify purity, innocence, and lay status, later to be changed into black and—when entering the higher ranks—colored robes. He will state the Five Precepts (*gokai*), the Three Pure Precepts (*sanjujōkai*), and the Four Great Vows of Bodhisattvahood (*shiguseigan*), obliging himself to keep them. He will take refuge in the Three Treasures by three times reciting "I will take refuge in the Buddha, I will take refuge in the dharma, I will take refuge in the sangha," and he will ritually state a verse of confession and repentance to purify himself of all sins. (If the ritual is conducted at the *honzan* this will be done at the *kaidan*, the precepts platform.)[93] Bowing to his family is an announcement of his symbolical parting from his biological family to whom he ritually expresses his gratitude. Bowing to the Buddha and stating his promise to become his disciple and child is a symbolic commitment to leave home to become a monk, the institutional and spiritual lineage bond taking over blood relations. As a guidebook for priest wives explains, no matter how close blood relations between family and son, the dharma relations will always be stronger in being a child of Buddha (*Josei no bukkyō* 5, 41). He will chant a verse (*ekō*) of transferring the accumulated merit gained from the ordination ritual to the four objects of debt, the three modes of existence, and the whole universe. As a sign of status lift, the preceptor (which usually is his own father) gives him, with the official approval of

[91] The correct ritual procedures and suggestions of announcements and oral instructions of such rituals are described in *Gōko hosshiki bonbaishō* and *Hōyō no tebiki*.

[92] A prescription of the procedures of the ritual can be seen in *Kyōka biyō*, 100–110.

[93] In 2000 there were thirty-one children gathered to the ordination ritual at the *honzan* (*Shōbōrin* 2000 9, 19:10).

the *honzan*, a Buddhist name, a *shami* rank, a "blood vessel" (*kechimyaku*, see 228), and a certificate of having taken the precepts (*kaichō*).

Mahayana Buddhist ordination is not, as in Theravada countries, two distinct ceremonies (lower and higher), but only one. It is usually held for the young boys while they still live at home with their parents (i.e., most often in the temple), or at least before entering monastic life. According to a survey from 1985 (*Hakusho*, 23), 85% were ordained while they were between 6 and 20 years old, that is, from the time of entrance into primary school until high school.[94] My own surveys show that the majority of persons having been ordained were temple sons (72.2% from the university *sesshin* and 81.8% from a class at the faculty of religious studies) and that the majority of the temple sons had been ordained (respectively 74.3% and 64.3%). Sons from temple families in general start their official clerical career earlier than those from lay families, perhaps due to the almost inherent expectations of temple succession.[95]

In spite of its symbolic significance, present-day Zen Buddhist ordination seems not to be valued as important. I was often told that it was "only a ceremony," and the above-described elements are not always contained in the event, which may be held as a part of a training assembly for young temple sons (*gakuto kenshūkai*). Sometimes the formal documents are even handed over without any rituals having been conducted, as responses in my own surveys showed as well.[96] In the abovementioned survey, only 19% stated that they had special feelings (*kanji*) toward *tokudo shiki*, 36% felt it primarily to be a matter of receiving the documents, and 20% stated they had no feelings at all (*Hakusho*, 23). As is also commented on in the survey, ordination has

[94] Only 8% undergo the ritual when they are between 21 and 30 years old, and 2% when they are above 31 (*Hakusho*, 23). A newer survey (2002) show that 76.5% were ordained before they reached the age of 20 (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 67). A survey from the Sōtō sect showed that 81% were ordained while in primary or high school (ibid.).

[95] Another survey (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 54–75) distinguishes between those from temple families and those from lay families. Whereas 59.3% from the first group were ordained during or before primary school, only 38.9% did so from the latter group, from which 34.7% were over the age of 18 (13.2% from the temple families) when taking the *tokudo shiki*.

[96] While eleven respondents from the Religious Studies classes and thirty-six from the *ōzesshin* had been ordained, only three and ten affirmed to have taken the precepts.

been encouraged to be valued as important within the institution, but it seems to have had no effect (ibid.).[97]

Reasons for this might be found in the institutional context of the ritual. First of all, ordaining (primarily) temple sons is not an activity through which the institution "gains" anything. Their careers are simply expected (and hardly negated by the youngster of such age), and ritually marking this does not really count as mission, training, or cultivation with which to further strengthen institutional bonds. Ordination to many is no more than "purely symbolic" in the sense that leaving home (*shukke*) to become a disciple of Buddha is—contrary to Theravada countries—a remote practice to enter many years later as a de facto "higher ordination," during which one is partly separated from social life and one's biological family. Temple sons are used to ritualized actions, and being the focus of attention is certainly not unknown to most Japanese children, few of whom think tonsure to be fancy. However, the ordination rituals are, to a more or less grandiose extent, conducted for most priests-to-be, events that, no matter how much or little semantic or institutional relevance they might be considered to have, still are part of the overall logic of the ritual process—a process demanding some kind of formalization and structure.

Installing the master

Few monks will ever have the opportunity to be celebrated as a true master and patriarch. The large ceremony of officially installing a master with *rekijū* 歴住 rank is held only every ten years or so, and only few living masters in all Rinzai sects hold such an honorific title.[98]

I was lucky to be able to observe one such ceremony in autumn 2000, when Yamakawa Sōgen, the *shike* ("Zen master," the title needed to become *rekijū*) of the Shōgenji *sōdō* at the *honzan* in Kyoto was ritually and institutionally recognized as a master. The ceremony is also called "ceremony of opening the hall" (開堂式 *kaidō shiki*). As it is often

---

[97] Only five out of the thirty-six ordained monks from the *sesshin* reported to actually use their *kaimyō*. Since not all answered the questions related to ordination, the number might be higher.

[98] Financial preparations are important reasons for such events not to be quantitavely inflated. Costs of acquiring the status from the headquarters, inviting hundreds of people to banquets, and accommodation, etc. are high and above the range or ambitions of many clerics.

assumed that persons undergoing such large rituals are actually aspiring to become a future abbot (for which the *rekijū* title is necessary) it is also said that he will be an "abbot for a day" (*ichinichi kanchō*). Being still relatively young and respected for his strict and social attitudes, Yamakawa was seen to be a possible candidate to become a *kanchō* in the future.

More than a thousand guests—monks and devotees of Shōgenji, family, priests from all over the country, and abbots from other Rinzai sects—were gathered in the *honzan* to see the ceremony. Some fellow priests had gathered days before to rehearse all details of the main ceremony, and monks, priests, and lay assistants were busy preparing all the parts of the grand event. The day before the public ceremony, specially invited representatives of the Rinzai clergy participated in preparatory rituals of purification and veneration. These continued on the main day, during which the master, followed by a procession to each place, in the dharma and Buddha halls, the founder's building (*kaisandō*), and at the temple gates paid tribute, chanted verses, and made offerings to the former patriarchs, celestial beings, the nation, and the entire universe, announcing his aspiration to his new status. The main rituals of transmission and recognition were performed and ratified in the dharma hall. Rows of priests in turn approached and bowed for the master sitting in the dharma chair (*tōdan*) on a raised platform looking north, facing the Buddha; "Buddha looks at Buddha, in a mirror effect" (Faure 1996, 194). The central ritual was the *shitenshiki*, where the new master (新命 *shinmei*) was presented with the lineage seal and genealogy chart. This is concealed in a box, only opened when new patriarchs are appointed-symbolically emphasized by him personally cutting the knot tying it together. Before again tying it with a new knot he wrote his own name on the lineage chart, bringing his person into the sacred lineage of recognized patriarchs. Chanting sutras, bowing, prostrating, and performing minutely measured movements signaled a formal and serious atmosphere, only broken by announcements over the loudspeakers and the general noise of people whispering or walking in and out of the hall.[99] To many, the most interesting and exciting part was when the master officially "revealed" the name of his own master,

[99] Most lay participants would not comprehend the very technical Buddhist terminology on the schedule handed out to the guests, and few would understand the ritual vocabulary.

from whom he had earlier in a secret (and less formal) ritual of transmission (伝灯相承の正式 *dentō sōshō no seishiki*) received the certificate of enlightenment (印可証明 *inka shōmei*). Since any monk can train under (and the unique ones perhaps be offered lineage transmission by several) masters, it is said, that a true disciple chooses his own master. The new master, holding his staff (*shakujō*), fly-whisk (*hossu*), and with his new violet robe—all Buddhist symbols of power[100]—attracted both deep attention and numbers of camera flashes in signifying his new master status. In a performative speech form he stated his promise to keep alive and propagate the Buddhist dharma and the Rinzai lineage. The ceremony was closed to the public, when representatives from the Rinzai clergy returned to the old "mother-temple" Daitokuji, where a symbolic communion confirmed the close relation between the different sects, between the new master and his lineage, and between origin (tradition) and transmission.[101]

Installing the priest

Yamakawa Sōgen was not appointed as the new abbot when former abbot Matsuyama left his office in 2002. On the 29 May 2002, I participated, with 1,300 other guests from all over the country, in the official ceremony bestowing the title upon the priest and *rōshi* Nishikata Gihō. This elaborate ceremony is called (*kanchō*) *shinsan shiki* (晋山式, "ceremony of opening the mountain"). Apart from representatives from the headquarters and priests from the *honzan* subtemples and local Myōshinji temples, abbots and high ranking clergy from other Rinzai lineages (*ha*) attended this formal rite of passage, which two months earlier had been preceded by the retirement ceremonies at the *honzan* of the former abbot, Matsuyama (the latter described in Shōbōrin 2002 52, 5:1–2). The (*kanchō*) *shinsan shiki* is an elaborate ceremony with many guests and rituals conducted at the *sanmon*, the *butsuden*, the

[100] The *shakujō* (Skr. *khakkhara*) is a staff with a metal ring attached to the top. It was originally one of the eighteen items of a monk, but also a pilgrim's staff. Like the robe, it has been associated with both institutional and magical power. See Faure 1995a on the symbolism of the Buddhist robe (Sanskr. *kāsāya*, J. *kesa*) in, in particular, Sōtō Zen Buddhism.

[101] The symbolism in the transmission of the dharma is more pronounced in the Sōtō sect, and especially in premodern time. The identification and transmission between master and disciple was symbolized with mirrors, statements such as "I have now found you, just as the Buddha found Kāśyapa," and mixing of (real) blood (see Faure 1996, 57–70).

kaisandō, the *gyokuhō-in*, and the *hattō*—and with six televisions outside, for the benefit of the guests not lucky enough to get seats within the building. The general structure and content, however, with offerings, prostrations, bows, gift giving, chanting, speeches, and symbolic power shifts with robes and religious paraphernalia, resembles the ceremony of installing the priest, a ceremony symbolically identical to installing the Zen master, and therefore also called *shinsan shiki*, or "ceremony of entering the temple" (入寺式 *nyūji shiki*).

This usually large ceremony is preceded by a ritual marking of having completed the period of monastic life and of receiving a document entitling one to become part of the clergy. Although this smaller ceremony is called the "ceremony of transmission"—from master to disciple (*hōmyaku sōjō no hongi, Shūsei*, 285) or simply "ritual of conferring" (垂示式 *suiji shiki*), it is often considered to be "only a formality" and an occasion to mark the new status of becoming assistant priest in what is often one's father's temple. There are no special rituals for "ordinary monks" in leaving the training hall. However, within six months after having acquired the title of *zendōshoku* (which most persons acquire by having spent a period in the monastery), he will have to go to the *honzan*—also called "climbing the mountain," 登山 *tōzan*—to give a "speech of spreading the dharma" (布教法話 *fukyō hōwa*) on the platform of the dharma hall and conduct a service for the founder in the founder's hall.

Although the extent to which the occasion is festively celebrated depends on the priest himself, the *shinsan shiki* is considered to be the most important grand ceremony for the temple, the priest's family, and the devotees (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 87). As opposed to the *suiji shiki* conducted at the main temple in Kyoto, this is an event at the local temple, lasting for an entire day. In autumn of 2000 I had the opportunity to observe the *shinsan shiki* of Okada Seihō in Kōunji, a small village north of Kyoto.[102]

Family, friends, local residents, *danka*, and members of the local Kannon-*kō*, representatives from the *honzan* and the parish as well as other priests (some of whom were fellow monks from the time in the training hall) were gathered for the occasion. The day before, family members, friends, and locals helped prepare the more practical matters (cleaning, decorating, arranging trays and flowers, etc.) while priests

[102] The history of the Kōunji temple is described in the small booklet Kōunji.

rehearsed the rituals, assisting both the priest in office and his son in remembering the detailed acts, gestures, and oral performances—the ritual manual (*Kōko hosshiki bonbaishō*) was used several times to check the correct procedures. The ceremony had been prepared for a long time in other ways as well. Young Okada (Seihō) had quit his full-time civil job, his father had mentally prepared for his official retirement, and the whole family had saved up money for the expensive celebration.[103]

The main rituals were performed in the main hall (*hondō*), consisting of primarily two symbolic narratives, structurally similar but inverted: the ritual of resignation for the old priest and the ritual of consecration of the new priest. The old priest (Okada Nanpō) was honored through speeches and letters for his having skillfully conducted the office for forty years. He performed his last ritual acts (making prostrations in front of the main deity, lighting incense at the alter, chanting sutras and *ekō*) and in a speech paid gratitude to all the *danka*. Although retiring publicly in front of the audience, in reality he would change roles with his son, becoming a functional assistant priest until he was not able to keep this office. After the ritually performed resignation, tea was served while the priest with his wife individually greeted and thanked all guests. Both had lived in the temple for many years—the temple has been in the custody of the family for generations—and the social and emotional bonds connecting them with the local community were expressed by personal greetings and ritual deep bows.

Signaling a break between the two ceremonial main parts, the *goeikakai* chanted religious songs to entertain and to signify institutional presence. High priests (mainly from the Myōshinji sect, but also from local temples belonging to other sects) entering the hall (*nyūdō*) on the red carpet, followed by the sound of drums and bells, announced the second phase of the ceremony. The young Okada led a procession of young children (*chigo*) from the neighborhood, ascending the stairs in front of the temple ground, toward the main hall.[104] This symbolism of youth and renewal was further accented by dress and religious paraphernalia

[103] I did not ask about the actual costs, but all the sake and beer, the sumptuous lunch boxes and evening meal to all the guests, the hotel stay for twelve fellow monks including delicious food and beverage, the bags full of return gifts to all guests, the photographer, the rented technical audiovisual equipment (large television, loudspeakers, etc.) all gave me the impression that this was an occasion requiring quite significant amounts of money.

[104] Formally, all children were supposed to carry and offer lotus flowers in front of the main deity, but I was told this ritual was skipped because of lack of time.

showing the new status of the future priest. He had been tonsured and was wearing a new clerical robe and a ceremonial hat (*Kannon mosu*), and carried a staff (*shakujō*) and an umbrella—a traditional Buddhist ritual display of honor and power. Having entered the hall, he performed different ritualized acts, assisted by his colleague priests, "testing" his abilities and promising his commitment to the office—a ritual called *suiji shiki*, which is a concentrated and further ritualized performance of the ceremony of the same name conducted at the *honzan* prior to the *shinsan shiki*. Six young priests (some of whom were his dharma brothers from the training hall) lined up in two rows, each ritually asking a question to which he should respond. These ritual enactments of the classical Zen dialogues (問答 *mondō*) were rehearsed beforehand—some of the priests had written sentences on their palms, at which they occasionally glanced before reciting the scriptural passages—and performed as ritual "tests" to see if the future priest was actually suitable to become a priest.[105] The "penetration" of the Zen dialogues was physically enacted by Okada squeezing himself in between the two rows of priests. Having been tested, the future priest for his part performed rituals showing his readiness to become part of the institutional and social community, revering the Buddhas and patriarchs (chanting *ekō*, offering incense, making prostrations), chanting protective scriptures for the main deity (*honzon fugin*), the family (*katoku fugin*), and the nation (*shukushin*), praying on behalf of everyone, and vowing to protect the temple and to attempt to follow his father's footsteps in becoming a good priest. The final ritualized acts in the main hall recognized and consecrated the new priest, ritually cementing his new status. Okada's religious teacher (*shisho*) from the Daruma-dera in Kyoto (see 237), in which he stayed during his time at Hanazono University, took his seat in the dharma chair in front of the altar, facing the audience. Okada, again dressed in a new robe, took his seat in front of him on a pillow,

[105] This was the word (*tesuto*) Okada himself explained to me, when I later asked about the ritual. This ritual testing is structurally similar to the "dharma battle" (*hossenshiki*) of the Sōtō lineage, in which a senior monk tests the monk (and future priest) sitting in the "hot chair" being ritually bombarded with tricky questions related to Buddhist doctrines, the contents of which may have been agreed upon or even rehearsed beforehand. This ceremony is separate from the actual ceremony of transmission (*denbōshiki*), at which the practitioner will receive his certificate (*kechimyaku*) recognizing his ability to become a priest. This ritualized testing of dharma comprehension has its more concretely intellectual counterpart in written examinations, the passing of which is necessary in advancing within the ranking system.

after having made honorific prostrations. His teacher and master presented him with a document from the *honzan* officially ratifying him as priest of the temple. As if showing and offering it to Kannon and his deceased predecessors, he held and turned it over the burning incense before showing it to the audience. Seating himself on the pillow in the middle of the hall he was the focus of congratulatory speeches (from a representative of the parish, the local Bukkyōkai, the *danka*, and the mayor) and telegrams. Having expressed his thanks to everyone, the festive event was immortalized by photographs in front of the temple, and further confirmed by a social communion confirming and celebrating both the old and the new priest and lasting until midnight.

Initiating the dead

Although death as the final ritual for a person within the clergy is structurally similar to the rituals surrounding death and afterlife for the lay devotees, it is more extravagant and symbolically dense. When a priest (and even more so when a master or abbot) dies, it is symbolically performed as the final nirvana (*parinirvana*) of a Buddha. He is praised for his virtues by (the family and) clerical colleagues, who vow to repay the depths of gratitude toward him. Scriptures are recited to wish him happiness in the other world (冥福 *meifuku, Hōyō no tebiki*, 163) and to symbolically transform him into a Buddha that has transcended life and death (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 87). He is referred to as a patriarch (祖師 *soshi*) and a *sonshuku* 尊宿 "venerable elder" or "enlightened master," and even as being identical to, or being within the same mode of existence as, Buddha and Bodhisattvas (*Hōyō no tebiki*, 164). The death of a priest is called *sonshuku senge*, "moving away of an enlightened master,"[106] or 津送 *shinsō* ("sent of [by] ferry"). The death as a "long journey" (ibid. 168) is ritually performed by a procession from the dharma hall to the crematory, and in a clockwise turning of the coffin through four "gates" (*shimon*) of the cremation ground, symbolizing the four stages of Śākyamuni Buddha (production of the thought of enlightenment, practice, awakening, and nirvana).[107] Today the ideal practices of writing death verses (*yuige*)—which are "symmetrical

---

[106] As opposed to the funeral of a *sōryo* without a priestly office, *bōsō shinsō*, and the funeral of a lay person, *zaike shinbō*.

[107] See *Hōyō no tebiki*. Faure 1991, 179–208 has analyzed the "ritualization of death" of Chan monks and priests, some descriptions and interpretations of which can also be applied to contemporary Japanese Zen.

to awakening verse" (Faure 1991, 187)—of ritually predicting one's death, of dying in meditation posture, of having a portrait (*chinsō*) made, and even of mummifying patriarchs (Faure 1991, 148–208) are all relics. Although death is also ritually and institutionally a problem, the funerals as the final ritual of passage are important in manifesting the virtue and power of the deceased priest or master, in turning him into his final Buddhahood, in inscribing him in the eternal lineage—a lineage sanctified by the institution and continued by new generations of clergy, the individuals of whom must undergo the same rituals of passage. (For further descriptions and analysis of funeral rituals, see 254.)

Structure and semantics of clerical rites of passage

Clerical rituals of passage follow the same general structure. Status lifts trigger symbols and terminology of processually moving forward and of digitally separating before and after in ritual displays, manifested by opening and closing ceremonies, of entering and leaving the hall, of ascending and descending the chair, of using colors and objects in processual and successive order. To the individual, each of the rituals of passage is part of a diachronic process beginning with the ritual of initiation (the *tokudo shiki* symbolically making the initiated Buddha's child), continuing in what is considered to be the most important phase, the monastic stay (which in many ways in the overall clerical process is the liminal sphere, the only phase in which practices and symbols of lowering are explicit), followed by reintegration as priest (the *suiji shiki* giving clerical rank, the *shinsan shiki* giving temple and professional office) or the possibility of being entitled a Zen master (the *kaidō shiki* giving status as patriarch) or even becoming an abbot (through the *kanchō shinsan shiki* ceremony), ending with the final "passive" performance of death.

The clerical rituals of passage also have a synchronic dimension. Within the clergy the ritual subject is related to his predecessor (his father, teacher, and master) with whom he eventually changes roles, taking over the symbolic power, which—in the act of continuing and transferring their personality and qualifications—naturally rebounds, recognizing both the master and his heir, and thus the tradition and the institution. Also, there is a synchronic display of differences in agency between clergy and nonclergy, symbolically represented as differences between human and Buddha. Rituals of passage are also performative

practices consecrating status and essence by means of naming, investiture and titles that activate the "performative magic of all acts of institution" which says "become what you are" (Bourdieu 1991, 122). Through the logic of synchronic relations the ritual subject is identified and "essentialized" as a clerical personage separated from the category of the lay community. Rituals of passage performatively execute and further essentialize the social and institutional divisions, symbolized and ratified by written words and certificates, dress and paraphernalia, institutional rank and office. According to Bourdieu (ibid. 122) it is one of the functions of the act of the institution through sanctified rituals of passage to discourage any attempt to cross the dividing lines. But one of the privileges of consecration also consists of the fact that

> by conferring an undeniable and indelible essence on the individuals consecrated, it authorizes transgressions that would otherwise be forbidden. The person who is sure of his cultural identity can play with the rules of the cultural game; he can confess that he likes Tchaikovsky or Gershwin, and even have the "nerve" to say that he likes Charles Aznavour or "B" movies (ibid. 125).

Although Bourdieu takes his examples from what I will later describe as biological and social rituals of passage (e.g., the "synchronic" differences between male and female being consecrated through "diachronic" rituals, such as circumcision), his point is relevant in understanding the behavior and statements of the "wild" Chan/Zen masters with "no rank" transgressing between conceptual, social, and institutional borders in having been recognized and consecrated as true masters. Such playing with the rules of cultural and religious games is, however, easier to retrospectively ascribe masters of bygone past of textual discourses than contemporary reality in which institutional and social rules and expectations demand certain behavior and classificatory belonging. Intellectuals and "postmodern Buddhists" outside or on the fringe of institutional relationship can play (or use the symbolic discourse of) such transgression as consecrated masters. In a less "dramatic" way priests can and do, through their having been consecrated as members of the clergy, transgress boundaries by being both religious specialists and members of the local community. They are human, but also "essentially" priests, holding a rank and office that the clerical rituals of passage have performatively helped them acquire.

3.6 Lay and Clerical Rituals

3.6.1 *Daily service and rituals of worship*

I usually sit every day in front of the butsudan to worship (reihai). I chant namu amida butsu, and pay my respect to our ancestors and all the kami.
(member of Hanazonokai)

Reihai: *temple and domestic worship*

Although not always recognized as such, Buddhism is very much a religion of worship.[108] This is also true of Japanese Zen Buddhism, both as part of the daily rituals of the monasteries and of the periodical rituals of the lay devotees. The rituals are basic in the sense that they are simple individual rites and/or clusters of units being part of other rituals and ritual complexes. Much of the basic and daily or periodic worship is related to ancestor worship, which is also defined by rituals of death and calendrical rituals, and the structure and meaning of these are only fully revealed when investigating all parts in interrelation (I will take up these aspects in later chapters). Although there are certain ideals of structure and invariance, worship is generally voluntary and not necessarily related to any specific time, place, or semantic code. Worship takes place at home in front of the Buddha altar (*butsudan*), at the local or main temple, religious meetings, religious festivals, and during pilgrimage.

There are several Japanese words for worship, the uses of which depend on contexts. *Ogamu* (拝む) means worship or respectful bowing, sometimes interchangeable with *reihai* or *raihai* (礼拝), referring generally to "worship," "devotional practice," or "paying homage," and including offering, showing respect, or praying. Sometimes it is used more specifically as equivalent to the practice of lifting one's hands up to the ears while kneeling and bowing with the head toward the floor. In this latter sense *reihai* is a simplified version of the Buddhist prostration, which is usually done with three successive bows (参拝 *sanpai*) and the clasping of one's hands (合掌 *gasshō*)—the number three indicating the threefold action by body, mouth, and mind.[109] While prostrations are

[108] Religious acts of worship have been a neglected field within much anthropology (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994, 80), even more so within Buddhist studies (see however Harvey 1990, 170–95 and Gellner 1992, 105–34).

[109] "*Reihai* is [the act of] folding the hands in *gasshō*, and with a devout feeling turning towards Buddha, bowing down the head" (*Hanazono Q & A*, 154). On specific

usually only performed at temples (especially during larger ceremonies), bowing and joining one's hands together in front of the face are general gestures of respect in Buddhist countries, and they are part of most rituals in monastic life, of temple ceremonies—often announced over the loudspeakers to the participants in the imperative: "*gasshō*!"—and ideally as part of daily worship in front of the *butsudan*.

Daily temple worship typically consists of morning service in front of the main deity (*chōka*), including sutra chanting, offering, *gasshō*ingm and lighting incense, all accompanied by the rhythmic sounds of bells and drums. In a more general way in which worship is seen as an *aspect* of all daily practice (日課行事 *nikka gyōji*), it also ideally includes working (作務 *samu*), cleaning (掃除 *sōji,* which is sometimes thought of as a special *kind* of *samu*), and *zazen*. Chanting sutras, cleaning (or *samu*), and *zazen* are considered to be the three obligatory duties of the religious practice of the priest, ideally

> conducted to daily train the mind for the sake of all people's peaceful mind, for repaying received favors toward the patriarchs, the founder and the patron of the temple and all the *danka*, and for expressing gratitude toward the protecting deities (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 75).

Although these rituals are considered daily practice, not all priests are engaged in frequently performing them. In a 1994 survey from the Kyōka Sentā (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 5), 43.6% reported that they actually conducted a daily morning service, 41.2% daily performed *samu*, and only 8.2% sat daily for doing *zazen*.[110] Temple sons (*gakuto*) often assist in rituals and are also expected to learn by seeing and doing, by participating in daily religious practices such as cleaning the main hall, chanting sutras, making offerings, and ideally in doing *zazen*. In the survey, however, only half of the priests had their children participate in the morning services (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 60), and in a survey from 1985, only 7% of the respondent priests claimed to teach their children *zazen* (*Hakusho* 18). Both temples and some monasteries are open for lay devotees for daily practice. I have experienced devotees joining the morning meditation in training halls or participation in

---

occasions, prostrations are performed nine (*kyūhai*), eighteen (*jūhachikai*), or even a thousand times (during ceremonies lasting several days, e.g., *jukai-e*).

[110] That the response rate was less than 50%—and presuming the respondents to represent the more active or engaged part of the priesthood—might even suggest generally lower figures.

worship in the main hall of the local temple. Others might come for taking part in cleaning the temple halls (sweeping and washing the floors, cleaning statues and altars), a religious practice both expressing wishes of continued social and institutional bonds and itself being a purificatory ritual.[111]

Kuyō (供養, Sanskr. *pūjā*) is another word for worship and offering, but mainly associated with memorial rituals for the ancestors. These are conducted periodically on special days commemorating the deceased (忌日 *kinichi*, death anniversary) as parts of the long ritual process of dying and being reborn, on specific calendrical rituals, and periodically—or even daily, for those who have recently lost a family member.

Whether conducted at home, when visiting the grave (墓参り *haka mairi*), or when attending a memorial service at the temple, *kuyō* is a practice that most Japanese take part in. In a national survey some years ago, 89% of the respondents said they either regularly (69%) or occasionally (20%) visited the grave of their ancestors (Reader 1991, 10). Although my own surveys are too small to make any generalizations, they do show lower figures, frequency generally ascending according to age and type of religious practice in which the respondents participated. A few respondents (elderly women) had even visited their family grave almost every day.[112] Another survey from 2002 shows that 15% of the respondents felt the grave and the memorial tablet (*ihai*) to be of most concern (*kanshin*) when visiting the temple (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 6). Asked which practices the priests thought to be most important for the *danshinto*, 35% answered memorial services for the ancestors (*sensō kuyō*)—a number far exceeding both worship in front of the Buddha altar, understanding the sutras, and practicing *zazen (Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 68). My own surveys revealed that participants from the university *sesshin* and the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai* had a much lower frequency in attending *kuyō* than those from the Musō Kyōkai meeting.[113] This was

[111] On cleaning as a religious ritual, see Reader 1995.

[112] 19% of those participating in the university *sesshin*, 50% of those from the *zazenkai*, and 63% from the Musōkyōkai had visited the grave within the last year—39% of the latter group more than ten times, two of them 150 times, and one of them 300 times. The large difference between the university students and the two other groups I take to be related to age differences. I have no reason to believe that members of the Zen Buddhist sects differ significantly in frequency of *haka mairi*, and the lower figures of my surveys I suspect to be related to the uncertainties of a small survey.

[113] 12.2% (*sesshin*), 8.4% (*zazenkai*) and 59% (Musō Kyōkai) had attended a *kuyō* within the last year, a fourth of the latter group having attended ten times or more.

probably due to the age differences; the Musō Kyōkai members were mostly elderly women who presumably had more deaths in their close family than the members of the other groups. It was not because the latter group claimed to consider such practice to give more merit (*kudoku*) than the other groups—memorial services were valued by all groups to be almost identically meritorious.[114]

Another individual kind of daily or periodic religious practice is the worship in front of the *butsudan* (仏壇), which, like the grave, is both a physical representation of death and afterlife and as a buddhized center of practice modeled after the symbolism of the temple and monastic world. The Buddha altar is a miniature domestic representation of the main altar of the temples (*shumidan*), which itself is a symbolic manifestation of the mythic Mount Sumeru. The *butsudan*, says a guide to Rinzai devotees, serves as a compact main hall (*hondō*) and hall for memorial tablets (*ihaidō*), and even as a copy of the Pure Land.[115] The *butsudan* is a cabinet of lacquered wood containing memorial tablets of the ancestors, Buddhist accoutrements such as candles, bells, and the offerings of food (cooked rice, fruit), drink (water, tea), flowers, and incense,[116] as well as statues or images of Buddha (or other deities). The latter is consecrated or brought to life by the priest in a ritual of having the soul enter the figure (開眼 *kaigen*), and reversely, when the old *butsudan* is discarded the soul moves out (*otamashii nuki*). It is similar to the god shelf (*kamidana*, which is a representation of the Shinto shrine), and often the two are found side by side—though the latter is much simpler and entirely devoted to the kami, whose diet is also different.[117] Size, splendor, and price of the *butsudan* depend on both sect and personal

[114] 43.3% (*sesshin*), 24.9% (*zazenkai*), and 39.1% (Musō Kyōkai) considered *kuyō* to be among the three most merit-giving practices, while the numbers for *reihai* were respectively 43.3%, 25%, and 41.5%.

[115] *Shingyō kyōten*, 38. See also *Zen to kuyō* 1999 and *Zaike sōgi* 1996. Winston Davis (1977, 55) suggests that the *butsudan* were introduced under the *terauke* system, as all families wanted their own "symbol of their proper registration and affiliation with such-and-such a sect." After the late seventeenth century it became common for most people to have their own Buddhist altar. Probably the altar was originally only for the worship of Buddha, the worship of ancestors perhaps having formerly taken place at a temporary spirit shelf (*mitamadana*) during *obon* (Smith 1974, 86).

[116] See *Gendai jiin yōkun*, 21 for a list of ten virtues (*toku*) of offering incense.

[117] Kami are more fond of sake than tea, and usually no flowers, incense, or food (except for rice cakes) are offered at the shelf (for a comparison of offered items, see Smith 1974, 91).

choice.[118] It is my general impression, from visits to various *butsudan* shops, that the ones designed as fitting particularly to the Rinzai sects are less extravagant than the ones of the Jōdō Shinshū—perhaps because, as one salesman explained to me, the Pure Land is not as important in the Zen sects (at least not in most of its official teachings). Apart from having Śākyamuni and the ancestor tablet enshrined, devotees of the Myōshinji sect are also encouraged to include statues or pictures of other Buddhas or patriarchs, or of the sect founder (*kaisan*) and patron (*kaiki*).[119] I have seen only a few of the latter, and although the institution has an interest in promoting sectarian differences through symbols and practices, I do not consider worship in front of the *butsudan* as well as the motives behind generally to depend on sectarian relationship, the main feature being ancestor worship.

> I sit with my husband 10 minutes twice a day in front of our *butsudan*. We pray, make offerings and pay our respect and show our gratitude [*kansha*] to our ancestors [*gosenso-sama*], who are also Buddha—just like we ourselves become Buddha when we die [*hokote ni naru*]

said Koike Shigeko, an elder woman and member of a Myōshinji women's club (see 150). Her practice and ideas correspond not only to most other Myōshinji Zen Buddhists, but in general to those of most Japanese.

Venerating the ancestors is also a practice conducted in the home of the *danka* ("*dankamairi*"), during which the priest will chant sutras in front of the *butsudan* (*tanagyō*). Although half of the Myōshinji priests never make such a monthly visit (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 94), it is considered an important aspect of propagating the dharma. I once asked a priest, Fujita Meidō, from a subtemple (Daihō-in) of Daitokuji to join him on such a visit. We took the bus, he dressed in black kesa and wearing tabi socks and geta wooden clogs, to Tenmangu, where one of his danka families lived. An elderly woman welcomed us, humbly bowing and apologizing for the narrow rooms. Her husband was ready and waiting

[118] That the *butsudan* also function as furniture—and as a personal status symbol (Reader 1991, 92)—naturally gives way to personal style and decoration. I once visited a devotee of Sōka Gakkai, who enjoyed showing me his *butsudan* with electric doors, light-show, and remote control, with which he could open the doors to the other world.

[119] See *Shingyō kyōten*, 40 for a picture of a standard altar of the Rinzai sect, *Danshinto dokuhon*, 138 for an illustration of the structure of the altar during religious services, and *Gendai jiin yōkun*, 25–26 for a description of how to practice in front of an altar (*butsudan no matsurikata*).

in a small room with *tatami* mats, *kotatsu* heater, television, a *tokonoma* (alcove) with a scholl and dolls, a *kamidana* ("god shelf"), and a *butsudan*. Within the *butsudan* there was a figure of Buddha, two ancestor tablets (*ihai*), incense, and offerings of apples, oranges, flowers, candles, tea, and a bowl of rice. All were seated in front of it, and with the priest leading all chanted the *Hannya shingyō, Sho saishū, Kannongyō, Daihōshū*, and an *ekō* each to Buddha and the ancestor's soul represented by the memorial tablet. The whole ceremony lasted about fifteen minutes, after which we were offered tea.

A survey from Myōshinji (*Kenkyū hōkoku*, 2) shows that 91% of the respondents had a *butsudan* at home, and that 71% of them used it for worship every day. These numbers are rather high,[120] and before claiming Myōshinji devotees to be more actively engaged in daily worship than members of other sects, it should be stressed that the individual persons in the survey were asked when meeting for participating in religious activities at the main center (e.g., *zazenkai, kenshūkai*), and thus it seems fair to assume that they somehow represent the most active minority of all the groups of *danka* and believers. Worship in front of the *butsudan* as a common family practice often is concentrated at specific times (especially during *obon* and on the memorial days of deceased family members), and individually as a daily or infrequent and less structured chore of either the husband or the wife.[121] Generally, daily worship in front of the *butsudan* is a simple and not very "serious" affair, often only including the placement of water and cooked rice and lighting an incense stick, and perhaps saying an inner prayer or communicating a few words to the ancestors.

Worship as ideal ethical and soteriological practice

Publications from the institution do, however, often emphasize the ideal for all members of the household to meet, since the *butsudan* is the concrete expression of the spiritual basis of the family (*Zau*, 55). As such it has the connotation of being the equivalent to the temple

[120] Reader (1991a, 7) refers to statistics revealing that 61% of the households had a *butsudan*, 60% had a *kamidana*, and 45% had both. In the report analyzing the Myōshinji survey results, the figure is compared to a Sōtō Zen survey from 1978 and an Asahi Shimbun nationwide survey from 1995 where respectively 91.7% and 59% had a butsudan (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 2002, 2).

[121] A general (i.e., not restricted to specific religious affiliation) survey from 1994 showed that 59.3% of the women and 45.2% of the men frequently paid homage in front of either the *butsudan* or the *kamidana* (Ishii 1997a, 91).

and the grave (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 116) in expressing the nostalgic ideal of *furusato*, the homeland of one's life, the local and domestic center transgressing modernity and time. The family ideal of religiosity not only corresponds to the ideal of "same faith and same practice," but also expresses the traditional ideal of the harmonious family, being extended into the other world by showing gratitude to ancestors, patriarchs, and Buddha as one large family.

One book defines the daily religious service (*gongyō* and *otsutome*) to be morning and evening service. *Tsutome* is explained to be a general gratitude of being alive, and as a feeling of repaying the favors (*on*) received from Buddha and the ancestors. It also means praying for safety and good health of the family, and peace and calm for society and the world (*Shingyō kyōten*, 29). This ideal attitude and practice of purifying oneself and directing positive feelings toward others is summarized in the Article of Faith in Life (or The Principles of Living, 生活信条 *Seikatsu shinjō*) and the Words of Pure Faith (信心の言葉 *Shinjin no kotoba*), composed by Yamada Mumon and considered to be the "two wheels of the sect" (*Josei no bukkyō* 3, 123), encouraging the individual devotees to every day live a true Zen life:

> *Once a day, let us sit down quietly, and settle our body, breath and mind.*
> *Let us wake up to the preciousness of life, making both our own and other people's life valuable.*
> *Let us be thankful for the life given to us, and collect the virtues of repaying this thankfulness*
> (*Seikatu shinjō*, in *Shingyō kyōten*, 20).
>
> *Let us sit down quietly and experience our body itself to be emptiness.*
> *Let us worship and pray, being confident that all sentient beings are originally Buddha.*
> *Let us live harmoniously, praying for the society to be a flower garden of the heart/mind.*
> (*Shinjin no kotoba* in ibid. 20–21)[122]

As in the temples (and the monasteries), daily rituals of worship in the home are normatively interpreted as both ethical and soteriological actions within the great discursive narrative of Buddhism, influencing

[122] Both texts are based on the chapters *shinjin kie, jikaku anjin* and *gyōji butsudō* from the *Shūmon anjinshō* (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 68), and as such they are functionally identical to the *Shushōgi* compendium of the Sōtō school. This was compiled in 1890 by a lay organization as a standard introduction to Dōgen and the sect's teachings, a status it still holds (SSSMC 1991, 170). *Shushōgi* can be seen in translation in Yokoi and Victoria 1987, 58–63.

both oneself and others. Offerings are interpreted as symbolically representing the six kinds of practices by which a Bodhisattva is able to gain enlightenment (*ropparamitsu*),[123] chanting Buddha's name (*nembutsu*) with a Buddhist rosary (*juzu*) is described as a way to extinguish the 108 forms of desire and achieve nirvana (*Hanazono Q & A*, 153, 165), and the whole ideal range of purification of body and mind (and of the *butsudan*), offerings, reverent bows and *gasshō*, meditation, chanting sutras, *ekō*, songs, repentance of having broken the precepts (*sange*), stating refuge in the Three Treasures (*kie*) and the Four Great Vows of Bodhisattvahood (*shiguseigan*) are ideal attitudes and ritual elements also practiced in monastic life. This symbolic identity is also legitimated in one book for priests, where the *butsudan* is described as the object of one's own belief (*shinjin*) and of having the role of being a training hall (*dōjō*) for cultivation and reflection on one's life (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 257). This ideal I also saw expressed in a video from the Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho, in which daily *zazen* was shown to be a daily activity to be done in one's own home, an ideal probably not being representative for many Zen Buddhists. Sutra-chanting is ideally seen as an occasion to pay back the debt to the ancestors, but also as an occasion to explain the importance of not forgetting to live a daily life as a practicing Buddhist (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212). The same ethical and soteriological aspects are ascribed another way of paying respect to the ancestors, the individual visit to the family grave on the temple's graveyard. The grave, containing the ashes of the family deceased, is both the junction between the dead and the living (*Zen Q & A*, 160), and a "training hall for the religious practice of the heart and mind" (ibid. 161), at which the act of cleaning the grave also is a purification of oneself (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 116). Likewise, prayers (祈祷 *kitō*, or 祈り *inori*) are ideally conducted not as demanding appeals for fulfilling one's own egoistic desires for material things; but when they are done with a no-mind and including praise, gratitude, and repentance, they are true manifestations of worship (*Zau*, 87). As such, Zen prayer is a form of *zazen* (ibid. 88), being a part of the process of purification toward enlightenment, through which one finds one's own self and which gives rise to a general wish for the happiness of all people (*Hanazono Q & A*, 157). True Zen worship is thus

[123] Water is equivalent to giving (*fuse*), powder incense (*zukō*) to keeping the precepts (*jikai*), flowers to perseverance (*ninniku*), incense sticks (*shōkō*) to devotion (*shōjin*), rice to meditation (*zentei*), and votive light (*tōmyō*) to wisdom (*chi-i*); see *Danshinto dokuhon*, 140–43.

seen, like practice and alms-begging, as an exchange without agency, or with agency acting with no personal interests at stake (with a no-mind, which the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas supposedly have). In this model, the ideal is actually to transcend the act of worshipping as an "in order to-ritual," the ideal being "to sacrifice sacrifice" (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994, 38).

Using parts of the basic ritual reservoir in daily life (manners and behavior, devotional dining, gratitude, keeping the precepts, etc.) is an ideal expressed both in manuals from the institution in extending ritual and ideological units into a total "Zen life," and as moral points to take home at the end of larger ceremonies or dharma talks. The role-model of such practice-philosophy is often referred to as being the sixth patriarch Huineng (J. Enō), whose idea of working with the right Zen attitude in one book is described as "work spirit," or "work ethics," *kinrō seishin* (*Josei no bukkyō* 2, 32). Also Baizhang (J. Hakujō), who made the idea famous by the slogan "no work, no food," and Nanquan (J. Nansen) with the idea of the "everyday mind" (平常心 *heijōshin/byōjōshin*), are ascribed the idea of rationalizing work as a dutiful quest with a mind of gratitude and religious "spirit" (see *Josei no bukkyō* 3, 36 and *Yoku wakaru Myōshinji*, 94–102), in which work (*samu*) is doing Buddha's work (*hotoke no tsutome*), and cleaning is not labor but "Buddha manners and practice" (*butsusa butsugyō*, *Gendai jiin yōkun*, 35).[124] Such ideals, which are equivalent to the ideal practice of the monks, are transferred as an ideal also for lay members, not only in specifically arranged activities (such as *zazenkai*, where *samu* and general "work ethic" and "mindful activity" is introduced) but also in daily life, at home, and in the temple. Thus "the strong virtue of practice (*jissengyō*) is to reflect on [the fact that] the time devoted to making each single day a holy training hall (*dōjō*) itself every single day makes one's character awakened" (*Zen Seiten*, 413).

The ideal of "secular" work and actions conducted as a religious practice is thus an ideal equivalent to the monastic ideal of totalization of practice, of concentration and extension of time and space (see

[124] In a subtemple of Daitokuji I saw a signboard saying: "Scrubbing, sweeping, pulling weed, wood-chopping. Daisen-in will willingly accept your labour of love if you wish to have a taste of practical Zen." Another kind of practical Zen was offered at another signboard: "If you buy a Daisen-in book, write down your name on the piece of paper and put the paper in the box so that the priest can pray for you tomorrow morning."

163). As such it is in its most extended sense a *ritualization*, a "process by which normal, everyday action is endowed with this quality and becomes ritual" (Humphrey and Laidlaw 1995, 64).

3.6.2 *Ritual texts and doing things with words*

Rhetoric, semantics, and magic

> A special transmission outside the teaching.
> Do not establish words and letters.
> Directly pointing to the human mind.
> See one's nature and become a Buddha.[125]
> (Welter 2000, 79)

These are the famous words ascribed to Bodhidharma, himself a legendary figure and a "textual and religious paradigm" (Faure 1986). The verse expresses the characteristic and quite unique Zen discourse on the iconoclasm and idea of direct transmission outside the scriptures (*kyōge betsuden*) to which many of the doctrines of the Zen schools are based, and which has become the epitome of most Western discourses on Zen Buddhism. Chan/Zen discourses have balanced between two poles of either affirming representations or neglecting their capability of capturing truth as merely skillful means (*upāya*, J. *hōben*), as pointing fingers. This complementary and often graded pair has for instance been expressed in the distinction between the Chan concepts of "dead words" (死句 J. *shiku*), scholastic writing, and "live words" (活句 J. *kakku*), "any teaching that is intended not to explain but to enlighten" (Buswell, 1988, 246)—somehow corresponding to the Indian Buddhist notions of interpretable (*neyartha*) and definitive (*nitartha*) meaning—and between "harmony between Chan and the scriptures" (教禅一致 *kyōzen itchi*) and "transmission outside the scriptures" (教外別傳 *kyōge betsuden*). Faure termed these positions respectively "canonical Chan" and "extra-canonical Chan" (1993, 239–40), suggesting a structural correlation between the two levels of truths (conventional and absolute), between gradualism and "subitism", between eclecticism and sectarianism (131), further complementarily contrasted in figures such as Bodhidharma and Sengchou, Huineng and Shenxiu being "symmetrical figures that imply each other" (130). A text prescribing not to be dependent on

[125] 不立文字教外別傳直指人心見性成仏 (J. *furyū monji kyōge betsuden jikishi ninshin kenshō jōbutsu*.)

texts (and a whole genre somewhat dedicated to this paradigm) is like a Magritte painting claiming the painted pipe not to be a pipe. It is like a paradoxical kōan not to be answered, but to be doctrinally reflected and self-investigatively meditated upon as a rhetorical language game inviting participation also in other games. "The slogan 'not depending on texts' was not a factual statement, but an expedient teaching device" with a "polemical function" (Foulk 1987, 228)—explicitly expressed by Huineng tearing apart sutras—and it is fairly reasonable to ask: "How can we take the iconoclastic rhetoric at face value, when it became itself part of orthodox discourse and turned into a highly formalized ritual?" (Faure 1991, 288–89). The slogan and the iconoclastic genre also point to an overall institutional power game expressing both the competition of "authority of those who control access to and interpretation of the texts" (Bell 1992, 136) as of the rhetorical power of having gone beyond this.

Modern Zen Buddhism, and especially Rinzai Zen, still uses the no-text paradigm to distinguish it from other sects and as an example of true Zen teaching (e.g., *Danshinto dokuhon*, 44, *Josei no bukkyō* 3, 47–50). But texts are very much part of Zen practice, as means of intellectual learning, institutional power relations, and ritual performances. I have often been referred to (*zazen* and) Zen scriptures from both clergy and laypersons kindly pointing the way for me to encounter true Zen.

Some Buddhists favor textual studies and scholastic teaching rather than meditation practice, and in Japan the aforementioned "critical Buddhists" Hakamaya and Matsumoto, but also Myōshinji-related scholars and intellectuals such as Hisamatsu, Akizuki and Nishimura, are exponents of true Buddhism to be based on (also) analytically and critically understanding doctrines. While such a position is naturally also found in traditional and Buddhist discourse, it is typical of a very modern "protestant Buddhist" approach in which texts and textual studies have acquired almost singular status as opposed to "magical" efficacious ritual practice. In a way such textualization of religion is elitarian, and discourses proclaiming texts to be fundamentally "true Buddhism" are often rooted in the ideas and practices of intellectuals, on the verge of or even in opposition to the institution. It is also, however, an example of the double-sided effect of Buddhist modernity, in which the laity have had different opportunities of religious upward mobility. In most Buddhist countries the laity in the process (and rhetoric) of modernization came to have access to those texts (and practices), which traditionally were solely in the hands of the clergy. The power

of mediation through controlling the texts has always been an important prerequisite of defining oneself as belonging to the clergy and the upper part of an institution, as opposed to charismatic individuals and folk movements. The ability to read, understand, and even poetically and artistically write such foreign and classical characters as (Sanskrit, Pali, and) Chinese—the characters themselves having been ascribed magical powers[126]—was, and still is, a symbolic capital expressing the essence of quality and power. Some texts were deliberately hidden or enshrined, treated as relics and treasures—holding scriptures not below the head being a still practiced norm in all (Zen) Buddhist monasteries. The apparent (and to some extent real) egalitarianism in Buddhist modernity in principle leaves no space for cleric text-mediation, since Buddhism can be bought and studied at home. However, professional mediators are still needed, and the quantity of texts and textual mastery seems not to be exhausted by the democratization of texts, but rather expanded. This is also within the interests of the institution, which through publications of texts and study groups can define orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Manuals of how to read texts and how to practice—what Bell calls "textualization of ritual" (1988)—is both a means of institutional standardization and a way of keeping relationships active through participation. Expounding the dharma orally is also an important part of Buddhist practice, either as scholastic and technical sermons for the monks (*teishō*, in which the master ascends the dharma chair to represent the Buddha preaching at the Vulture Peak), lectures (*kōen, kōgi, kōwa*), or dharma talks (*hōwa*) for the laity. The latter in particular is held in a vernacular language and often with an entertaining tone, which gives the individual priest a certain freedom of speech, and the charisma of a priest can often be judged by his capability of capturing his audience through his personal performance.

In religious studies, scholastic exaggeration in focusing on the religious texts' semantic contents has often distorted perspectives on seeing texts as practice, "the products of cultural practices—practices of religion, to be sure, but also of language and literature, social organization and custom, politics and economics" (Bielefeldt 2005, 240). Although I

---

[126] As Tambiah also mentions (1970, 197), it is a curious fact that Śākyamuni Buddha was known to have talked in the local languages, and yet Pali (and Sanskrit and archaic Chinese and Japanese) became the canonic Buddhist language that only professionals understand. He also suggests a hierarchy of languages (e.g., between Sanskrit, Pali, and Hindi); the more archaic, the more magical efficacy and power (1968, 177–78).

have talked to several lay Zen Buddhists who were sincerely interested in "scriptural Buddhism" and whether a dog actually has (or is) Buddha nature, and though the number of books published and sold all over Japan on such matters seems to suggest the opposite, using texts as performative tools without or with only little reference to doctrinal content should also be stressed. Most people simply do not understand (and are not interested in learning) archaic language or technical terminology, and although I have experienced occasions in which a skilled dharma lecturer can capture his audience by expounding the teachings in vernacular language, Stanley Tambiah's observatiojns from Thailand could be representative of Japan as well: "audience interest and concentration on what is being said is partial, if not minimal. There is much going to and fro, of sleeping and turning off, and of murmuring. Sheer attendance and hearing without necessarily understanding is efficacious and brings its award" (1970, 195). What Bell (1988) calls "ritualization of texts"—turning texts into ritual objects (367)—includes both "the orchestration of ritual activities to serve as the medium of interaction for a particular set of social relations" (390) and what could be called a performative or magical way of using texts as instrumental means of influencing oneself and/or otherworldly agency, notwithstanding—or only incidentally—according to what the religious texts semantically contain (Tambiah 1968 and 1979).

Myōshinji texts

> We have to explain those old and difficult texts, so they are more easily understood. Most are written in old Chinese, which only specialists can understand. Teachings like the Five Precepts also need explanation if they have to make sense to modern people.

said a missionary teacher (*fukyōshi*) from the Myōshinji headquarters, responding to my inquiry on using religious texts for the laity. Despite the doctrinal insistence on not being dependent on scriptures, different kinds of texts are important as religious objects and doctrines, and as means of communication to the clergy and the laity.

In various publications different kinds of texts are treated and discussed, also according to their ritual significance. In a chapter on the function of the temple and the role of the priests, a manual for priests (*Jūshoku oboegaki*) subdivides doctrines (*shūshi*) into different categories, several of them being groups of religious texts used within the sect: Scriptures and sutras (経典教典 *kyōten*), recorded sayings (語録 *goroku*),

general, or universal Buddhism (通仏教 *tsūbukkyō*), and sect teachings (*honpa no oshie*).[127]

Some of these are in themselves devoid of, or only marginally signifying, semantic content. Mystic formulas (陀羅尼 *dharani*) primarily belong to the same group as institutional certificates and stamps (*inka shōmei, kechimyaku, kaimyō*, stamps in scrolls or books carried by pilgrims) in being magical passports and amulets used to achieve a specific goal. These are often parts of rites of passage, of individual rituals of invoking a deity (e.g., chanting Buddha's name, *shōmyō*, to invoke him in one's heart/mind, *Josei no bukkyō* 4, 28), or of soteriologically prescribed ideals (e.g., of chanting a *dharani* for the salvation of all sentient beings, *Shingyō kyōten*, 57). Amulets (*omamori*) containing small texts (often the *Heart Sutra*) belong to this category, and at both the *honzan* and the Hanazono Kaikan such amulets are sold, all having the Myōshinji brand. Some texts have also been politically efficacious, as when (often fake) enlightenment certificates were used as passports to cross geographical boundaries, or when precept names have been used to discriminate against the ethnic *buraku* people.

Other texts are semantically dense, but seem to have been designed primarily for ritual use in which the content can be "unwrapped" or used in its compressed (and wrapped) form as instrumental object. Kōan are examples of this, but also stating the refuges, the precepts, and the Bodhisattva vows are uses of texts that might be followed by hermeneutic understanding and ethical consent but which in themselves

[127] *Kyōten* 経典 means sutras as the "religious truths experienced, explained, and transmitted by Shakuson" (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 49), whereas *kyōten* 教典 are the general description of the Buddhist Scriptures. This latter category include general Mahayana sutras (e.g., the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannya shingyō*) and the *Kannon Sutra* (*Kannongyō*), the latter being part of the *Lotus Sutra*), mystic spells and mantric formulas, e.g., *dharani*s [J. *dharani* or *shu/ju*] such as *Daihishu* and *Shōsaiju*), general smaller ritual texts and vows (e.g., text on invocation of merit transfer (*Ekomon*), the Four Bodhisattva Vows (*Shiguseigan*) as well as the Myōshinji composition *Shūmon anjinshō*. The chapter of the "collected sayings" of the Zen patriarchs includes the Sixth Patriarch's Sutra (*Rokuso dangyō*) and the Record of Linji (*Rinzai roku*), but also poems (*wasa*), illustrations (e.g., the Ten Oxhearding Pictures, *Jugyūzu*), and collected editions of classic sayings (e.g., *Mumonkan*). On the *goroku* genre, see Berling 1987. The sectarian texts are those considered to be specific for the Zen sects (e.g., Bodhidharma's *Furyū monji*) and texts with special importance for the Myōshinji sect (e.g., emperor Hanazono's imperial letters, *Goshinkan*), as well as the modern lay-oriented *Seikatsu shinjō* and *Shinjin no kotoba.* For alternative classifications, see *Rinzaishū nōto* and *Zen seiten*. The general Buddhist texts are more fundamental, classical Indian texts and teachings from the Pali Canon (e.g., the Four Noble Truths, the teachings of interdependent origination) and general institutional formulas (e.g., taking refuge in the Three Jewels).

also function as formal acts of commitment, often recited at major ceremonies at the *honzan* or when the abbot as part of his missionary activities visits the local temples.[128] Other smaller texts are used at other specific ritual occasions, often chanted rhythmically to emphasize their quality as mnemonic device: *ekō* are chanted to invoke merit to ancestors, Buddhas, or patriarchs,[129] verses of penitence (e.g., *Sangemon*) are chanted for repenting and purification, and ritual manuals (e.g., *Gōko hosshiki bonbaishō* and *Rinzaishū nōto*), containing texts and minute prescriptions of how to perform these, also tell which texts to be used at which occasions. The genre of religious songs (*eika*) probably originated as hymns chanted during pilgrimage, but modern songs too have been constructed as easily remembered songs of praise and institutional commitment.[130] Also, verses (*ge*, Skt. *gatha*) and hymns (Jap. *wasan*) praising the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, patriarchs, or the dharma find their importance in ritual—e.g., *Shari raimon*, which is a text used to honor and worship the relics of Buddha or Hakuin's praise of *zazen* (*Zazen wasan*), used as a religious text at different occasions, from *zazenkai* to funerals.[131]

Texts with a more explicit narrative structure or texts functioning as guides or manuals naturally invite to scholastic reading, but they also in themselves have an important function as ritual objects. What would otherwise be called informative or instructive texts are also ritualized and chanted, as for instance Dōgen's *zazen* manual in the Sōtō temples, the "Admonitions" (*kikan*) in Zen monasteries before the *rōhatsu sesshin* or the so-called *Pillow Sutra*, which is used at funerals in proclaiming the

---

[128] In *Rinzaishū nōto* (351–60) a section of "chapters of extended practice [行持] of the Zen school" includes both the Four Bodhisattva Vows, the Three Refuges as well as small extracts on karma, the merit of *zazen*, repentance, etc.

[129] E.g., *Shingyō kyōten*, 97–104. See also KH 11, 2004: 9, where the meaning of *ekō* is explained in a twofold way: a soteriological aim of saving all beings by reading and chanting, and a ritual means of transferring good virtue (*kudoku*) toward other beings, especially dead people at funerals. The same function also applies generally to the sutras and religious teachings (*okyō*), which are seen as beneficial for oneself, for the ancestors and for all (*minna no tame*), being directed to Buddha and the ancestors as *ekō* for the happiness in the other world and repose of the soul of the latter, while also being objects with which to pray for the salvation of all presently living beings (ibid., 6).

[130] E.g., *Kenshū no shiori*, 10–13, showing simple songs written for chanting at Hanazonokai meetings (in which Hanazono, the importance of gratitude as well as the ideal interrelatedness between individuals, family, nation, and the world are praised). In *Shingyō kyōten*, 243–52 songs related to specific times (*Hanamatsuri no uta*, *Jōdō-e no uta*, etc.) as well as the Four Great Vows of Bodhisattvahood are classified as "Rinzai sect hymn selection."

[131] In *Rinzaishū nōto*, verses, or extracts from Buddhist masters, are classified as "songs of the way" (道詠).

dead to become Buddha (see 221), and emperor Hanazono's imperial will, the latter two categorized as rituals (*gishiki*), rather than as scriptures. Also the text of teachings aimed at lay followers *Shūmon anjinshō* is a ritual object chanted at different religious occasions—and in one scripture book classified as a *wasan* (*Zen seiten*)—as are the two small texts *Article of Faith in Life* and *Words of Pure Faith* (see 192), which are further compressed versions of this text. The Kannon Sutra (and especially the part of it called *Enmei jikku*) and the perhaps most popular Buddhist text in all East Asia (perhaps due to its convenient shortness), the *Heart Sutra* (*Hannya shingyō*), are used widely in all sorts of ritual contexts, although only few comprehend or are interested in their semantic contents. That the latter is object of all kinds of (religious) souvenirs—telephone cards, tea cups, amulets, scarves—and itself is used as an *ekō* to the main deity (*Shingyō kyōten*, 52) suggests its importance, which is also approved in a guidebook for priests, where the text is described as being very usable due to its great *riyaku* and *kudoku* in both prayer and sutra-copying (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 49).[132]

Ritualization of texts

There were only four older ladies in the temple that day, but usually there would be up to twelve people joining the monthly assembly, they convinced me. The functioning caretaker of the temple is also the smiling and friendly leader of the group, welcoming and pleasing her guests with green tea, sweet cookies, and light talk. The guests showed their experience as participants by automatically taking out their ink, grinding it while entertaining themselves with social talk. One of them put the copy of the *Heart Sutra* under her own piece of clean paper; the others used it as a template to look at when writing the full text.

A typical sutra copying assembly in a local temple will last for an hour or two. The priest might chant a sutra, make offerings, or just light an incense stick before the actual ritual of copying a sutra—in most cases the *Heart Sutra*. Each participant grinds the ink, picks up a clean paper and a print of the sutra which might be just looked upon as a model or put under the clean paper as a template. Whether writing in silence or

[132] Whether semantically dense texts such as the Heart Sutra was actually addressed to (or developed out of) a ritual context—and thus an example of a textualization of ritual—or the reverse is out of the scope of this volume. See Lopez 1996. At the Shinto shrine Fushimi Inari south of Kyoto I even bought an *Inari shingyō*, a Heart Sutra dedicated to the fox deity.

while chatting socially with the priest or the other participants depends on the context, but both moods seem to be appreciated as motivations for joining. Having copied the sutra, one's name and address is written on the reverse side, together with a wish (*negai*). This may be of a specific or general nature, e.g., for transferring merit to one's ancestors, for removal of illness, or for world peace or the spread of happiness to all sentient beings—the ideal being not to make it an egoistic strive for *genze riyaku* (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 120). The copied sutras are then offered in front of the main deity and consecrated by the priest chanting *ekō*s over them and later ritually burning them. The whole activity lasted about an hour.

Sutra copying (写経 *shakyō*) has in all of Buddhist Asia been a means of textualizing, transmitting, and teaching the dharma. But is has also been a ritual practice of purification, devotion, and gaining merit, either as single events of larger ceremonies or as a singular ritual in periodical sutra copying assemblies (写経会 *shakyōkai*).[133] In Japan, such practice is as old as the presence of Buddhism, and both at the Myōshinji *honzan* (where there is a special room for sutra copying) and in many of the local temples *shakyōkai* gather more or less regularly for this practice. As a guidebook for priests says, since it is a practice much easier than *zazen* it is primarily aimed at women (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 214). My own surveys and experience from attending two *shakyōkai* confirm this to correspond to reality, suggesting attendance is also related to age and correlation to participation in other kinds of practice. While only a few individuals from the university *sesshin* (5.4%) and the *zazenkai* (4.2%) had attended a *shakyōkai* within the last year, half of the participants of the Musō Kyōkai assembly had done so—i.e., *shakyōkai* attract mainly people from other practices typical for elderly women. a few young men and women, and people interested in meditation. In a survey from the Kyōka Sentā, 12.2% of the responding priests claimed to arrange *shakyōkai* (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 185).

A general positive evaluation of the merit (*kudoku*) of sutra copying[134] corresponds to the way this as well as other text practices are treated

[133] On gaining merit by copying and printing books and texts in Chinese Buddhism, se Kieschick 2003, 164–85.

[134] 13.5% of the university students in the *sesshin* and 14.6% of the Musō Kyōkai members valued *shakyō* to be most meritorious, while the number for *zazenkai* participants was only 4.2%. Among the three most merit-giving practices it was valued more evenly; respectively 32.5%, 24.4%, and 25%.

in publications from Myōshinji, and the way these are seen as part of cultivating the lay members. Copying, reading, hearing, and chanting sutras are praised for their meritorious values, whether these are seen as a reservoir of possible benefits, as means of a transformative (soteriological or hermeneutical) process, or as equivalent or identical to other kinds of rituals.

Hakuin's heir, Tōrei Enji (1721–92), in his *Sutra Chanting Announcement Board* (*Kankinron*), speaks of the correct mental attitudes with which the scriptures must be read (読経 *dokyō*) in order to benefit from them, and lists eight kinds of merit to be achieved from this practice: it helps concentration (*sanmai*), destroys obstacles, removes diseases, fulfills prayers, pleases the heavenly realms, saves the departed souls, increases knowledge, and profits one's livestock.[135] Reading sutras is simple and apprehensible to all people, who thus might use these rituals to "help understanding doctrines and teachings in a smooth way" (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 88), which in itself will lead to deepening of faith and, if practiced daily, to greater value in life (*Josei no bukkyō* 1, 2). A pamphlet says there are two ways of using scriptures: searching for the meaning of them, reaffirming the teaching and vowing to practice oneself, or reading with a *mushin*, without understanding the meaning of the words (*Okyō ni shitashimu* 2), itself being a purification of body and mind and a vow to follow the teachings of Buddha in daily life (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 29). Even without understanding, the content reading or chanting has as much value as *zazen* (*Shingyō kyōten*, 31); it is seen as a "Zen prayer" (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 120), as doing "*zazen* with a high voice" where "one's body and mind is settled, and you enjoy a refreshing feeling" (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 214) or even as a ritual identification with Kannon (*Shingyō kyōten*, 60). Also, revering physical representations of texts are meritorious. It is said that circumambulating the sutra storehouse containing 6,525 volumes is as valuable as reading them (*Okyō ni shitashimu* 2, pamphlet). Such magical efficacy of words is not unique to Japan (where the concept of *kotodama* 言霊 has such content), but is found in all Buddhist cultures being "in accord with the true principles

[135] See *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 258 and the pamphlet *Okyō ni shitashimu* 2. Both these interpret the merits in a modern terminology, including removing stress (destroy obstacles), realizing gods and Buddhas as one's heart/mind (pleases the heavenly realms), and spreading the dharma ("Buddha relations") to include all sentient beings (profits one's livestock). In a volume of Hanazono (1994 July) an old Chinese story is told about a young man who overcame his illness, lived a long life, and made merit to his dead parents through *shakyō*.

of Buddhism. If this were not the case, sutra copying and chanting would be for nothing" (Reader and Tanabe 1998, 76).

Lay individuals can performatively generate effects by and on themselves or others by means of words and texts (chanting, reading, reciting, hearing, writing, studying, meditating upon or venerating as object)—collective rituals in particular are said to have more efficacy and help in lifting one's own religious feelings (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 88). But the priests are the ones having the authority to act as mediating agents, both in invoking mysterious powers or in themselves performing as Buddhas and patriarchs. When people present at a dharma talk or a sermon do not actually listen to the contents, it is not only because of lack of interest but also because of the logic of gaining merit through mere participation under the actions of a religious specialist, who is in the capacity of doing things with words, whether holding sermons, artfully doing calligraphy, or decoding or performing archaic and foreign scripts. The ritual power of the priest is efficacious even if he makes mistakes or misses elements, just as the efficacy of chanting or copying a sutra does not depend on the aesthetic form, rhythm or pronunciation—though the archetypal text-ritual may be propagated as an ideal. The ritual text itself is also an actor (Bell 1988, 368). Just like the relics of Buddha, they are manifestations of the origin—they are essentially magical "things" combining past with present, Buddha, and the holy sources of tradition, with the individual participant taking part in and embodying these archaic words. What Reader and Tanabe calls "Sutra Buddhism" (1998, 100) thus comprises both the possibility of this-worldly magical efficacy, doctrinal understanding, personal cultivation, and ideals of salvation of all sentient beings. Whereas some texts are rooted in certain kinds of rituals, others are multifunctional and potentially able to imply several fields—just as some agents are more focused on some kinds of (readings and uses of) texts and rituals, whereas others cover several levels, also within the same ritual. Religious words and texts are legitimate as both ritual objects in themselves and as symbols, as models or guides "pointing to the moon" and as "pointers to insight"[136]—also within a religion that (also) claims not to use texts at all.

[136] The name of a book written by former rector at Hanazono University (Morinaga 1985).

3.6.3 *Rituals of realization:* Zazen *and* zazenkai

Having completed an ōsesshin, I have promised myself from now on in my own life to carry out practice in my own home.
(Lay participant in *zazenkai, Hanazonoshi* 2003 53, 9:28)

I don't really do much zazen, actually not at all. I'm too busy, but I guess I ought to...
(Zen priest, personal communication)

Meanings, structures, and ideals of meditation

Meditation is the key symbol of most kinds of Buddhism. It is part of the early Eightfold Path and it is one of the later Mahayana "perfections" (*paramita*). *Zenshū* as the "meditation school" etymologically derives its name from it—Zen (禅) being a phonetic transcription of *dhyana* (Sanskr., *jhana* in Pali)[137]—and *zenjō* (禅定) or *zazen* (座禅 "seated Zen," or "seated meditation") is the main practice and symbol of the Zen sects, according to both the official teachings of the sects as well as the images and opinions of the devotees, whether actually having practiced *zazen* themselves or not.[138]

Meditation has also played an important part of Chan/Zen discourse and of what Faure (1991) calls the "rhetoric of immediacy." Although Chinese Chan masters were known to possess supernatural powers due to their "demonic dhyana" (Faure 1987, 349), it was a common topic of classical Chan to criticize or ridicule meditation as a cultivating ("gradual") practice based on dualisms between meditator and object,

---

[137] On the etymological and ideological origin and development of the Chinese *chan*, see Foulk 1987, 116–30. On a discussion of the Western and Buddhist concepts of "meditation," see Sponberg 1986.

[138] According to my own surveys, *zazen* scored rather high points in the list of which words seemed most "Zen-like" (禅的) and which practices gave most merit (功徳). 45.8% of the respondents at the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai* thought *zazen* was most important (70.8% most or second most important), 56.8% from the university *ōzesshin* (79.8%), and 7.3% (26.8%) of the Musō Kyōkai members. 50% from the *zazenkai* thought *zazen* gave most merit (63.5% most or second most merit), 37.8% (52.7) from the university *ōzesshin*, and 7.3% (14.6%) of the Musō Kyōkai members. It should, of course, be emphasized that the ritual context in which I conducted the surveys also influences the statistics. The *zazenkai* and the *sesshin* were ritual circumstances already presupposing the two concepts to have a certain value, whereas the latter gathering was of a completely different kind. That the figures from the last group were lower might also be due to the fact that most participants in *zazenkai* are men (see below), and that almost all of the Musō Kyōkai members are elderly women whose religious activities are of quite another kind.

between practice and goal, between ordinary and extraordinary mind. Since all sentient beings possess the inherent Buddha nature, since there is no mirror to polish, since the ordinary mind *is* the Way, since the true enlightened master is the true man without affairs, why should there be any reason to sit in meditation, as Dōgen asked during his days at Mount Hiei, as Huaizhang rhetorically asked his disciple Mazu when the latter was trying to become a Buddha by meditation, and as Sengai illustrated with the sitting frog wondering whether it was also a Buddha? Meditation (*chan/zen*) has often been negated as an instrumental ritual, but affirmed as an ideal concept and practice identical to—or nondistinguishable from—what could otherwise be seen as its goal: wisdom (*prajna*, J. *hannya*), enlightenment (satori or *kenshō*), Buddha nature (*busshō*), and no-mind (*mushin*). By defining a correct use and idea of meditation as a *manifestation* of Buddha nature and as an expedient means in realizing this, there was a way out of the "self-destructive dialectic" (Faure 1991, 60) and of the "naturalist heresy" (ibid. 59). Thus meditation in Chan/Zen discourse(s) came to have both the status of an almost transcendent ideal, and as a concrete monastic practice the negative image of an "instrumentalist" function and attitude overcome by the Rinzai lineage through the "sudden" illumination by kōan practice (看話禅 *kanna zen*) and by Dōgen and the Sōtō lineage through the idea of both "sitting only" (只管打坐 *shikantaza*, as opposed to meditation on an object or with an aim) and extended practice (行持 *gyōji*), an aspect of the idea of identity between practice and enlightenment (修証一等 shushō ittō).[139] The Chan/Zen traditions have used meditation as their main symbol and practice in promoting themselves as the legitimate carriers and transmitters of correct Buddhism.

As probably the most simple (though certainly not most easily conducted) ritual, meditation is still the ideal and most prototypical practice of contemporary Rinzai Zen,[140] and an icon of institutional

[139] Bodhidharma's "wall contemplation," in which identity between agent and object, mind and Buddha nature is manifested (see McRae 1986, 73), has become a symbol for both lineages. The distinctions between the lineages are often, however, exaggerated by sectarian apologetics. Suzuki also mistakenly identified the northern/southern and gradual/sudden discourses with Sōtō/Rinzai (Faure 1993, 55–60). However, the different approaches are useful as analytical distinctions, and today the Sōtō schools do not use kōan in meditation practice.

[140] It is the fundamental practice (*Hanazono Q & A*, 134) and the figurehead (*omotekanban*) of the sect (*Shingyō kyōten*, introduction), the superior and most rational method of awakening to one's original nature (*Kenshū no shiori*, 14).

legitimation: It ritually defines and symbolizes the sect, underlined by the consistent form and repetition, which is always stressed. It is perceived and promoted as being the only ritual based on the practice of Śākyamuni Buddha, which is also the reason why post-modern Japanese Buddhists and Westerners idealize meditation as the only authentic Zen Buddhist practice.

Zazen ("seated meditation") is the word most often used to designate the practice of "sitting down in silence, adjusting one's body, breath and mind/heart, liberating one's mind/heart and feeling free" (*Zen. Mind to mind*, 27), of "regulating the disorder of the mind, and entering into a mental state of purity, resulting in a oneness of spirit" (*Kenshū no shiori*, 14). Calming the mind is a prerequisite to all Buddhist meditation, and—contrary to many other techniques—this is often the only guiding principle meditating Zen Buddhists are given as advice on actually how to do "interior" meditation.[141] But although, as is often mentioned in Zen texts, *zazen* can be done anywhere and anytime, it is a practice designated for specific times (see below) and places—either at temples, training halls or at home, where a personal, clean and quiet *dōjō* may serve as a correct frame of practice. And it is also very much a bodily ritual focusing on form (*sugata*): Breath should be regulated and slow and for beginners serve as an object of meditation, eyes should be half-open, the back should be straight—"Just like Mt. Fuji," as one instructor said during a *zazenkai*—and the seating position should ideally be full lotus. Either you sit correctly, or you don't—sitting with eyes closed in Indian or *seiza* position would not be counted as *zazen*, but perhaps *meisō* 瞑想), a word also meaning meditation or concentration, but with no technical or sectarian connotation. A sheet of information from Eiheiji said that only those able to sit in *zazen*-position were allowed to join the *zazenkai*, a rule also counting for entering the priesthood of many Rinzai training halls. However, correct posture and strict corrections might be an ideal prescript for the "archetypal" ritual, but (following also the logic of Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994) by committing oneself to join the ritual by entering the meditation hall and taking the posture in order to participate in the practice, one is actually doing *zazen*. Thus, young people not used to, and old people no longer capable of,

[141] In a *zazen* guidebook from a *zazenkai* at Myōshinji, the way to regulate (*totonoekata*) the body, the posture (*suwarikata*), and the mind is shortly described (*Zen Mind to Mind*, 27–32).

sitting cross-legged, can still participate in "entering meditation" (*zazen ni hairu*), being a practice, says a manual for priests, with no relations to either age, sex, work, or education, which gives "unexpectedly deep feelings through true experience" (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 88).

Zazen is both an individual ritual in itself (the beginning and end signaled by a bell), and a single rite in a series of other small rites—*gasshō*ing, bowing, chanting, walking meditation (経行 *kinhin*, which is also a circumambulation around a Buddhist deity or building). It is encouraged to be an activity of memorial services (*Shingyō kyōten*, 182) and of certain calendrical rituals, such as the memorial days of Daruma (*Zau*, 48) and emperor Hanazono (*Shōbōrin* 1996, 11:2), and especially in the period up to the enlightenment day of Śākyamuni Buddha, the *rōhatsu sesshin* ("meditation retreat of the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month"), during which the monks and participating lay devotees sit in meditation for a week—some of the tough ones sitting in *zazen* posture also during the nights. This latter period is seen as the best moment to reexperience Śākyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, being both a ritual mortification of the ego and a ritual metamorphosis and yet expression of immortality of the body (Faure 1996, 204). It is also an occasion for commemoration and performative reenactment of the founding events of all Buddhists. As such it is also a way to show and feel commitment to the tradition, a motive also signaled by the names of some of the assemblies. In a booklet from Myōshinji (*Tebiki*, 64) the schedule of a "repay-of-gratitude [*hō-on*] *zazenkai*" is described, and the same title was used to a memorial *zazenkai* of the 450th anniversary of the founder of a subtemple of Daitokuji (Daisen-in), which I visited a few times in 1997.[142] Such *zazen* assemblies, 座禅会 *zazenkai*, are also arranged periodically within the Myōshinji sect for members of the sect, for companies, or for other interested. The Zendōkai (禅道会) is a *zazen* assembly held individually at temples within the honzan, while the Taishū Zendō (大衆禅堂 "Zen hall for the common populace") is the *zazenkai* organized by the Kyōka Sentā and held in the *zen juku* or in the *hattō* of the *honzan*. Apart from the possibility of going to daily *zazen*, students at Hanazono University can also participate in a yearly *ōsesshin* (大接心 "searching the heart/mind" or "great *zazen* assembly)

[142] These *zazen* sessions were held periodically during the first three months of 1997 and lasted half an hour in the mornings, attracting (while I was there) primarily *danka*s and small groups of company employees in their suits.

at the Myōshinji *honzan* guided by teachers (who are also priests) from the university. Previously this *ōsesshin* was also held at some of the other Rinzai monasteries in Kyoto. In the one I attended in September 2000, there were 160 participants; 110 of them were students (the rest were instructors, teachers, etc.), and three-quarters of them were male. Almost half of the students were from the *zen juku*, having shaved hair and wearing black robes. Periodical *zazenkai*—of which there are many in Kyoto—may last for only a couple of hours or several days. The ones I have attended had almost the same daily programs with many hours of *zazen*, sutra chanting, listening to dharma talks, cleaning and/or working (*samu*), and generally experiencing a terminology and strict and formal way of life foreign to most lay participants. This difference from ordinary life is often expressed by the instructors in underlining the uniqueness of a monastic stay—and by the agony of first-timers.

Meditation practice

There were three young monks from the training hall and two visiting nuns from other Myōshinji temples representing the clergy and guiding the ten visiting lay participants, most of whom were women. The *zazenkai* in the early Wednesday evening in August 2004 were held at the prestigious *tacchū* temple, Reiun-in. The young monks explained for potential newcomers a few necessary details about sitting in lotus position. Most seemed to be quite familiar with it, though the noise of one of my neighbors shifting position suggested pain and lack of experience. We sat two periods of thirty minutes, with a 10-minute walking meditation (*kinhin*) on the veranda surrounding the beautiful meditation room in between. A short dharma talk on *zazen* and practical information on future arrangements ended the *zazenkai*, after which several of the participants went to the small adjoining room to pay respect by bowing and lighting an incense stick in front of the statue of the former abbot and resident of this temple, Yamada Mumon (see 61). The monks thanked the guests for coming, being ready to get back to their *dōjō* and their final chores of the day. One of the nuns, who thought her own master would think it inappropriate to be interviewed beyond a few polite remarks, told me smilingly that she enjoyed *zazen* every day. Two of the lay participants laughed loudly outside the temple, recounting their experiences of having pins and needles in their feet during *zazen*. Apart from the pain, they enjoyed the stillness and felt good about being there. They were not affiliated to the temple as *danka*, but came because they were believers (*shinja*) living close to the *honzan*.

One of them had been there three times before. It was the first time her friend had participated in what could be called a rather typical Zen Buddhist *zazenkai*.

Although meditation is an important Zen Buddhist symbol, it has "never been a very popular practice, even during the so-called golden age of Zen. It has always appealed essentially to a religious or intellectual elite" (Faure, 1985, 85). This is true for most kinds of (Japanese) Buddhism,[143] including Zen: "At the vast majorities of Zen temples [...] no one practices art, no one meditates, and no one actively pursues the experience of enlightenment" (Bodiford 1992, 149). *Zazen* is mostly a practice of the monks, and apart from participating in specific occasions or themselves leading a *zazenkai*, only a minority (8%) of the priests regularly meditate,[144] a situation not different from the Sōtō priests (Reader 1986, 14). In a survey from the Kyōka Sentā, 22.9% of the respondents in charge of a temple answered in the affirmative that they had *zazenkai* as one of their cultivating activities for the laity (*kyōka katsudō*)—compared to 31.7% within the Sōtō school[145]—which was more than children's, women's, and dharma talk assemblies (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 184).[146] Another survey (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 77–83) showed that in the last sixteen years (from 1979 to 1995) there were 2,778 lay people attending the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai*, an average of 17.7 persons each time.[147] Nearly half (43.5%) of them were in their twenties, and more than twice as many men (64.1%) than women (31.8%, the last 4.1%

---

[143] In a survey from 1994 conducted by the newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun, only 1.6% of the asked men and 2% of the asked women claimed to have participated in meditation (Ishii 1997a, 91). What counts for mystical visions and supernatural journeys probably also could be said about descriptions of meditation: "It was a somewhat eccentric minority that took such soteriologies literally as models for their lives" (Bielefeldt 2005, 241).

[144] In this Kyōka Sentā survey from 1996 there were 2,573 respondents (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 6, 59).

[145] SSSMC 1995 (115). Twenty years earlier the number was only 12.1%, rising within the next ten years (1985) to 39.5%, a development ascribed to an active promotion of *zazen* as a means of cultivation (*kyōka*, ibid.).

[146] It should, however, be stressed that in this survey only 28.5% responded, and that such a number itself might suggest who is actively engaged in *kyōka katsudō*, and who bothered to answer questionnaires from the *Kyōka Sentā*.

[147] In 2004 there were 149 people participating in the Taishū Zendō *ōsesshin* (*Shōbōrin* 54, 8:5), and the year before there had been 152 persons throughout the year (*KH* 11 2004: 221).

being foreigners). In a more recent survey, 34% said they had experience in *zazen* (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 6), a rather high number, which I would assume is due to the respondents being representatives of the most active devotees. In my own surveys, 20.3% of the participants of the university *sesshin*, 11.4% of those from the Musō Kyōkai, and 83.3% of those from the Taishū Zendō *zazenkai* had previous experience in *zazen,* the latter primarily from this or other Myōshinji *zazenkai.* The figure from the Taishū Zendō is higher than previous surveys in which it is clear that most (almost three-quarters, *Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 204) only attended once, the number of regular members (*teichaku shita kaiin*) increasing by age. Attendance as a singular event might be due to the lack of interest and lack of novelty value after having had the one-time experience riding the wave of the "Zen boom" or the "Oriental boom" (ibid. 2, 203), or after having attended a recently opened *zazenkai.* A priest tells of the frequency of attendants descending until there was only himself left (*Hakusho*, 51). To continue carrying out the practice in such situations demands firm belief in its usefulness or a certain educational, political and educational strategy, as in the case of the daily *zazenkai* at Hanazono University, where I often sat next to an elder gentleman in an otherwise completely empty hall (see 212). Seeing a meditation assembly as a (once and perhaps for all) ritual event on the same footing as other ritual occasions might also be the motivation behind participating in the abovementioned memorial *zazenkai* and *rōhatsu sesshin*—and for many of the students of the university *sesshin* who had no worries in telling me that their only motive for joining was to get educational credit (counting as much as an exam). It might also be experienced as one of a series of rites of passage. To most priests, meditation was a practice of the monastic stay, itself a liminal sphere before reintegrating into ordinary life with a clerical status. Such is also the background of most companies using temples for institutionally socializing their employees. In particular, initiating courses for newcomers (*shinnyū shain kōsu*) will, through meditation and strict monastic life, help them learn or refine the arts of ego-suppression, discipline, and submissiveness, an experience for many of being a turning point in their lives (Frischkorn 1990, 115).

However, if it is true that "people's adherence to an institution is directly proportional to the severity and painfulness of the rites of initiation" (Bourdieu 1991, 123), then *zazen* and *zazenkai* would be obvious means of attracting new members—from both my own small

surveys and my general impressions from attending different *zazenkai* it seems that quite a few of the attendants are not sect members[148]—and deepening the engagement of the *danka*. The survey from the Kyōka Sentā suggests that regular participants are also the real "truth seekers" (求道組 *gudōgumi*), with a strong will and motivation, who—as opposed to the mere curious one-timers—can overcome the hardships and thereby find the true values of meditation practice (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 203). This group of sincere and regular devotees I also recognize as quite a significant part of the attendants of the *zazenkai*. An example of this type of practitioner is Sawada Shōichi (b. 1917). As a *danka* of one of the *tacchū* temples in the *honzan*, he had regularly been attending morning *zazenkai* at the Hanazono University for twenty years, before which he had participated in meditation practice with Yamada Mumon at Reiun-in. Apart from sitting perfectly and motionlessly in full lotus position, he was well versed in the texts chanted—sometimes more so than the priest leading the *zazenkai*. When I last met him in 2004, he had started sitting every morning at his own home instead. In spite of his advanced age he still considered *zazen* the most important practice of Buddhism.

Being conscious of *zazen* as the true means of spiritual progress, truth seekers invest themselves in what Tanabe terms a "ritual of realization" (1999, 10), perhaps enjoying the logic of ascribing more meaning, feeling, and commitment to religious rituals, the more intensive and hard they are. Like monks, these "truth seekers" sit straight, silent, and unmovable during meditation, and the firmness and fluency of form (*sugata*) seems to be correlative to the experience, attitude, and commitment to the practice and/or religious institution of which the practitioner is part. The silence, the posture and straight back of a meditating monk or lay-meditator express both "getting it right" and "meaning to mean it." indicating the idea that ritualized form itself is a training method to generate inner cultivation and vice versa: inner cultivation is a method to achieve perfect form. The student monks-to-be living in the *juku*, some of whom had participated several times in the university retreats and regularly attended other *zazenkai*, clearly were living proof of this, when compared to some of the others who sat in not

[148] 66.7% of the *zazenkai* participants were Buddhists, 16.7% were Zen Buddhists, and 16.7% were "other." At my first Taishū Zendō *zazenkai* in 1996 there were no Myōshinji-affiliated participants.

very elegant postures, clearly expressing both suffering and disinterest. Meditation retreats and assemblies are thus also performances. Both in the sense of reenacting Buddha's archetypal action, and in communicating attitudes, personality, and hierarchies. The priest and/or instructor will act as a master, like the master in the monasteries encouraging the participants with his *keisaku* and his rhetoric and dramatized pep talks. In one *zazenkai* the instructor explained the function of the *keisaku* stick to be saying "let's keep it up a bit longer" (*mō sukoshi gambarimashō*), a typical Japanese way of expressing personal endeavor and cultural work ethics. The master expresses rhetorical skills in scolding and shouting, also during a gentle talk. The individual participants, like the monks in the training hall, will express (or even compete in showing or achieving) status by physical posture and fluency in enacting the ritual forms. Some of the participants of the Taishū Zendō go to private *sanzen* with the *rōshi*, a practice that is allowed after having participated twenty times (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 202). One analyst of a survey sees this as an advantage in bringing them closer in deepening their Zen experience, but also as a disadvantage in creating a hierarchy and a distance between them and the newcomers (ibid.).

Some of the regular participants can be classified as belonging to the intellectual and elitarian type of practitioners. They are generally not as interested in other rituals, and find meditation to be primarily a "religious training" (修行 *shugyō*) and "seeking after truth" (求道 *gudō*) rather than ritual (行事 *gyōji* or 儀式 *gishiki*) or (institutional) cultivation (*kyōka*).[149] Some are quite conscious of the discourses on meditation not being a practice "in order to" achieve a goal but rather an activity ideally transcending both agency (no-mind) and object (emptiness), a ritualized activity acting out itself as the ideal rituals of alms-begging and worship. Some also follow the widespread ideal of "emphasis on realizing the experience of seeing one's own nature [*kenshō taiken*] and becoming a Buddha by means of *zazen*" (Nara and Nishimura 1979, 181). The saying that sitting one day in meditation is being Buddha for one day (一日座れば一日の仏 (*Shingyō kyōten* 118) is a dogmatic prescription for ritual identification with Buddha in doing *zazen* as a singular or periodic event. A video from the Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho

---

[149] Both *shugyō* and *kyūdō* had 41.7% responding to these as primarily being keywords for *zazen* (own survey). Interestingly, only 8.3% primarily associated *zazen* with "mental cultivation" (修養 *shūyō*).

stresses the importance and value of even five or ten minutes of meditation each day in becoming an unsurpassable human being (*subarashii ningen*), and a guide for Zen priests states that no matter how busy one is, *zazen* can easily be integrated as a daily practice (*Zau*, 31). But the ideal to sit in meditation every day throughout life is also an ideal to become a Buddha all one's life, and an ideal for the institution to engage the *danka* as permanently active devotees. *Zazenkai* usually end by the master encouraging participants to bring their experiences back home, applying them to daily life with the idea that "adjusting oneself [in *zazen* posture] is adjusting one's life" (*Hanazono Q & A*, 134) and adjusting one's life in terms of Zen ideals in itself generates deeper commitment to the institution.

Although ideally not being an "instrumental" ritual, the merits (*kudoku*) of sitting in meditation are listed in a Book of Scriptures:

> When sitting in the morning, courage will spring up
> When sitting in the evening, gratitude will be born
> When sitting alone, you will enjoy stillness
> When all are sitting, harmony will arise
> When sitting properly, you will keep your good health
> When keeping on sitting, you are promised a long life
> (*Shingyō kyōten*, 32–33)

The benefits of meditation as a means of inner healing, of reducing stress, and of finding general spiritual and existential well-being are not only the subject of many popular books with a certain tinge of new age, but also of books and talks by Zen Buddhists, with or without being framed in an overall soteriological context.[150] The motives for doing meditation or joining *zazenkai* are various.[151] Some come to find or restore meaning in life after tragic experiences (the death of a close relative) and/or a feeling of emptiness (in its negative, non-Buddhist sense), existential suffering and meaninglessness. Some have heard or

[150] Meditation as a means of spiritual development is also a popular topic in Japanese bookstores. The modern trend of not using *zazen* as a practical means of investigating one's self on the "salvation path" (*kyūdō*) is criticized in a book for Zen priests (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 213).

[151] Some of the themes mentioned below are taken from *Kenkyū hōkoku* 2, 208–26. A Web article focuses on the importance of reducing stress being a primary motivation behind the apparent rise in Zen meditation groups especially among women, who, according to a survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare states that 57.7% of the asked Japanese women reported a great deal or some degree of stress (http://web-japan.org/trends/lifestyle/lif030624.html).

read about Zen and *zazen* as means of finding peace of mind (*anjin*), one's true self (*jiko*), or the roots of Japanese culture; others enjoy frequenting different *zazenkai* as a religious "kick." Meditation as a purificatory ritual is obvious to many—including the company that sent one of its employees to a remote temple (Shinshōji, the former International Zen Center near Okayama where I stayed one week in 1996) in order to quit smoking and drinking, and those who see *zazen* as purification of one's mind and body in practicing repentance[152] or eliminating bad karma. In the aforementioned survey on karma, 28.7% of the respondents felt that *zazen* was a means of cutting off karma effects. As one expressed it, "If bad karma cannot be cut off by doing *zazen*, the existence of the Zen sect has no meaning" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 132).[153]

Local *zazenkai* as places of social gathering are also important, the frequence and contents depending on the personality of, and relationships between, the priest and the participants. Often meditation is but one of several activities, including social talk, tea, games, or an occasion to visit the family grave. Once at a Sunday *zazenkai* in an Osaka suburb, a woman after meditation and the dharma talk took out a stack of copies of a song she had written for the celebration of someone in her family—she wanted the *zazen* group to rehearse it, to see if she had written it properly. Talking to priests and *zazenkai* participants and reading the letters of the now nonexistent magazine of the abovementioned Zen center (Shinshōji) also gave me overall clear evidence of the appreciation of the social dimension amidst the meditation hours.

Meditation for the laity and "spiritualization of rituals" are prime examples of the effects of Buddhist modernity, as is the abovementioned "democratization of texts." No matter what the varied motives may be, meditation is foremost considered to be a practice of the monks, and as such a practice through which one can experience or symbolically

[152] "Searching deeply for one's own self through *zazen* is a strict practice of *sange*" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 131).

[153] 11.5% felt that it could not, 42.0% that "it was good if it could"—that is, 70.7% affirming a "positive" relationship between meditation and karma (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 69). Some of the comments from the survey: "*Zazen* is the most suitable practice for purifying one's mind, to awaken to one's Buddha-nature. Living a daily life with a Buddha-nature and Buddha-mind, I think, is in itself a way to extinguish and cut off bad karma" (ibid. 130). "'*Once a day, sit down quietly, and settle your body, breath and mind*'—this is the way to get in good condition the three acts of the body. The ten evil deeds turn into ten good deeds" (ibid.). "When you establish a pure mind through *zazen*, by itself bad karma will disappear" (ibid.).

identify with the "true" and "original" Zen Buddhism. This is also within the interests of the institution. On the one hand, attracting *danka* or non-*danka* in the hope of making them respectively engaged believers and practitioners (*danshinto*) or sect members is a goal and a symbol of successful mission and cultivating efforts. On the other hand, in keeping monastic life and *zazenkai* as true Zen Buddhist *shukke* symbols and fields from which lay individuals can have a taste but be of a different "essence" (i.e., non-cleric), not entitled to encompass other than as periodic "guests," the institution also has an interest in keeping the division between lay and professional. This is done not only by the repeated reminders of *zazen* and the life of the training halls being strict and almost inhuman, but also in keeping the image of Zen—and the Myōshinji sect—as a *shukke* religion, though *shukke* and *zazen* in reality to most clerics are only transitory phenomena. Upholding the image of a strict, truth-seeking religion with a practice that makes Zen essentially Zen might be difficult though, since "a Rinzai temple not including *zazen* in its ritual activities [*hōji*, *gyōji*], can it really be called a Zen temple?" (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 13).

3.6.4 *Calendrical rituals*

"Yearly rituals," "religious practice throughout the year," or "calendrical rituals" is what the indigenous term *nenjū* (*nenchū*) *gyōji* (年中行事) refers to.[154] These include ritually marked events, some of which, depending on the media in which they are described, are exclusively for the monasteries or the subtemples at the *honzan*, while others are open to all. Monastic rituals were described in chapter 3.4, and in this chapter I will concentrate on the latter.[155] The individual rituals constituting *nenjū* rituals are almost identical in the publications from the institution addressed to the laity, being important—and to some the only—meeting grounds of religious interaction between lay and clerical Zen Buddhism. Calendrical rituals are in nature periodic and more or less repetitive, and in the Japanese context generally held according to specific dates of the Western calendar being "woven into the fabric of Japanese life, partitioning it and giving it a sense of the regular, seasonal

[154] For a brief introduction to Japanese calendrical rituals in general, see Pye 1986.

[155] See Tsuchida et al. 1988, 242 for a complete list of annual observances in all Rinzai sects, and Foulk 1988, 160 for a schedule of these at the Myōshinji *honzan*, and 175 for ordinary temples.

passage of time" (Ishii 1997b, 1). Some of these are characterized by being seasonal and often originating in an agricultural framework later having been ascribed Buddhist significance. Others are commemorative, in that they "recall important historical events, whether or not the date is accurate" (Bell 1997, 104), and as such are more directly related to, or intended to be, of Buddhist and/or sectarian significance. Some yearly celebrated occasions are institutional assemblies held at the *honzan*, and I will give an account of one such event as a case example.

Seasonal rituals

The New Year (正月 *shōgatsu*) is one of the most widely celebrated ritual occurrences in the whole religious year of all religious sects, often in a cooperative division of activities between Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. The night of December 31 is called *joya*, originally meaning "to stay awake throughout the night." At midnight, temples all over Japan ring "the night-watch bell" (*joya no kane*) 108 times, symbolizing the washing away of the Buddhist 108 human evils. New Year's purification has different expressions, and physically cleaning one's house, socially coming to terms with friends and neighbors, economically paying one's debts, or psychologically clearing one's mind are some of the ways to celebrate the seasonal transition, and reminders of such activities are usually described in the January issues of the pamphlet *Hanazono*. Ritually regenerating institutional and social ties is also part of New Year, and during the night priests in the subtemples at the *honzan* with common dharma relations (*hōrui*) circulate to each other's temples, offering incense, reciting sutras, honoring Buddha and the patriarchs, and joyfully drinking sake. Although New Year was originally also a festival of death, visiting temples and shrines on New Year's Day (*hatsumōde* 初詣)—extending beyond a few days—is primarily celebrated as a festival of life and of joy. The Buddhist service *shushō-e* (修正会, "ritual in the first month [*shōgatsu*]), usually held in the morning of the first day of the year, includes prayer-chanting to protect against evil, for the peace of the nation and for the happiness of all beings.[156] This is also the object of the assembly of the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra (大般若会 *daihannya-e*)[157] in the Buddha hall at the *honzan*, an assembly also occurring in

[156] A Japanese emperor as far back as the sixth century listed objects of prayers for *daihannya-e*: a peaceful nation, fertility, recovery of illness, removal of hardships, traffic safety, prosperity for one's family, peace and safety (*Daihannya-e* pamphlet).

[157] *Daihannya-e* is either referred to as identical to, or as a rite within, the *shushō-e*.

May and September as part of the virtuous monthly prayers assembly (*zengetsu kitō-e*). The main ritual is the "revolving reading" (転読 *tendoku*) of the larger edition of the *Heart Sutra* (*Dai hannya shingyō*) in which the assembled priests in high voices chant random fragments of the 600 fascicles contained in stacks of sutra books lying on the tables being rapidly flipped by each priest. Such reading is a "prayer service" (*kitō hōyō*) in which the texts are chanted as *dharani* (*Dai hannya-e* pamphlet). Although I found the ritual very interesting—the chaotic sounds and movements being different from most Zen rituals—when observing it on a cold morning in 1997, I saw only a few people passing by outside, tossing coins, *gasshō*ing, and reciting the mantra from the *Heart Sutra*. A local *daihannya-e* might include more festive activities, including offerings of rice cakes to a scroll of Daruma or the sixteen benevolent kami who purify "evil minds" (*akushin*, ibid.) and the handing out of talismans (*daihannya fuda*), which are carried home to hang on the wall in the entrance—and, like the "evil-destroying arrow" (*hamaya*) at the Shinto shrines—having served their purpose are returned to the temple the following year. Another festival associated with the lunar New Year, *Setsubun* ("sectional separation") in February, has similar symbols of renewal and possibilities of ritually effecting the coming year. As the old New Year of the lunar calendar, *setsubun* attracts various kinds of "folk" rituals in both temples and shrines. In the next chapter I will describe a *setsubun* at a Daruma-*dera* in which different kinds of "folk rituals" have been integrated into the history and identity of the temple and Zen tradition. Also at the Zen temple complex Tenryūji I have witnessed folk tradition during *setsubun*, where music, lottery, sale of amulets, food, and drinks were some of the activities attracting visitors, who at that particular day also entered and worshipped at some of the subtemples opened for this occasion.

Rituals of cosmic and personal purification and renewal are also interpreted as spiritual and soteriological means of cultivation. New Year is a good opportunity for awakening and following the way of Buddha (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 13), and it should be taught that prayers and wishes are done with the object of true happiness in mind, that *daihannya* expresses true wisdom arising from one's own pure and original mind (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211), and that the talisman is not to be seen as a magic tag by which to remiss sins, but as a means of self-reflection, a material imitation to "momentary meditation" (*Hanazono* 1995, special New Year's edition, 16).

Soteriological interpretations are also important in the publications on *higan-e*, the spring and autumn equinox celebrated a week in March and September, characterized as the most representative practice for Buddhists (*Hanazono Q & A*, 192). *Higan* 彼岸 means "the other shore" (i.e., nirvana, satori or the Pure Land), being a place or a state to which one crosses over after having practiced the six *paramita*. *Higan* is the opposite of "this shore" as the world of delusion (*mayoi sekai, Josei no bukkyō* 4, 22), just like the ideal world is different from the actual world (ibid. 71), and using the weeks of equinox to practice on the Buddha way and cross over from self to no-self in being enlightened or experiencing happiness in daily life is an ideal promoted by the institution.[158] When day and night are of the same length it is said that the Pure Land is approachable in all four directions (*Zen Q & A*, 138), a time most efficacious in bringing ancestors to the other side through ritual services and in realizing the ideal of the ritual agent acquiring a "mind of the other shore" (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 24). Associating spatial and temporal metaphors with ideals of practice and attitude affecting both participants and ancestors are part of the logic when priests conduct memorial services at local temples, in the subtemples, and in the memorial hall (*shidō*) in the Buddha hall at the *honzan*, and of one of the most celebrated rituals in Japan, *obon*.

Obon, or just *bon* 盆, is the popular name of *urabon*,[159] often translated as the "Festival of the Dead." It is the yearly occasion, usually held on the 14th and 15th of August, for the ancestors to return to the living for a short period, being guided by lanterns and a bonfire showing them the way to and from the other shore, a symbolic journey some places dramatized by actually sending out small paper boats in the rivers. The ancestors are invited to join a festive party at home, where a special table for ancestors (*shōryō dana*) is set up for them, in front of which the local priests chant sutras and *ekō*. The family graves are well-visited during

---

[158] E.g., March issues of *Hanazono* 1995, 1996, and 1997, *Shingyō kyōten*, 194, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 84, *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211.

159 *Obon* or *urabon* is a phonetic transcription of the Sanskrit word *ullambana*, itself a corrupted form of *avalambana*, meaning to "hang down," referring to the "service performed for a dead person to save him from such tortures as being suspended upside down" (Inagaki 1988, 355). According to the *Urabongyō* (composed and translated into Chinese between 266 and 313, ibid.), the first service for the repose of the dead was held by one of the ten major disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha (Maudgalyāyana, J. Mokuren), who fed poor monks and people to rescue his mother from starvation in the Buddhist hell.

obon—being both a ritual of death and yet a period of social rejoicing. With *higan* it is the prime occasion for expressing gratitude (*hō-on*) and for recognizing a life of continuation between ancestors, living beings, and later generations (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211).

In 2004 I observed the *obon* ceremonies at the *honzan* in Kyoto. The number of participants during the 9th, 10th, and 16th of August were not registered, but a qualified guess from one of the representatives from the headquarters was 10,000 people. Many of these were not affiliated with the Myōshinji sect, and as a small pamphlet explained, the ceremonies were open to all, regardless of sect (*shūha*) and doctrine (*shūshi*). Within the temple complex, people were lining up to strike the large bell, for this occasion designated the "welcoming bell" (*mukae kane*) and the "seeing off bell" (*okuri kane*), signaling the main aim of *obon* being the periodical communication with the departed souls (精霊 *seirei*). Tents were set up in front of the dharma hall, where visitors could buy paper lamps on which to write their names and hang up outside the *hattō*, or they could have one of the several priests on duty write *kaimyō* names on small *tōba* tablets. Inside candles and flowers were sold in thousands, offered in front of an altar set up for this occasion. In the evenings of the three days, the abbot and several priests conducted ceremonies for the ancestors (*sensō kuyō hōyō*) within the dharma hall, one welcoming the spirits and another seeing them off. Paper lamps, inscribed *tōba* and old offerings from the household's *butsudan* (*kumotsu*) were consecrated and ritually offered by the priests, and a special ceremony for the current year's aborted embryos and stillborn babies (*mizuko*) were held separately. Apart from being an occasion of financial importance, *obon* is a period and series of ceremonies symbolically expressing the relationship between the institution, the laity, and the paramount communication with the ancestors.

Jizōbon 地蔵盆 is a special kind of *obon*, dedicated to Jizō on his holy day (*ennichi*),[160] the 24th of each month in August. As opposed to unlucky days (*yakudoshi* and *butsumeshi*, the latter referring both to the death of Buddha and to ill-omened days) such holy days are important occasions for individuals and *kō* to visit temples. It is, "by means of the miraculous efficacy of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and patriarchs, the

[160] *Ennichi* is "the holy day of a deity, the day (*nichi*) when the opportunity to develop karmic fortunes, affinities, and connections (*en*) with the deity is at its highest" (Reader and Tanabe 1998, 40).

day at which to ask for wishes to come true and to develop bonds to Buddha" (*Zen Q and A*, 153). Since Jizō is the deity[161] protecting dead children and aborted fetuses, his *ennichi* and especially *jizōbon* is also an occasion for the deprived to memorize and make offerings to Jizō, praying for his help in guiding the helpless young ones into safety on the other side. Not all Zen temples have special rituals at *jizōbon*, and the activities naturally vary from temple to temple.[162] In the Myōshinji honzan, it is held at the Jizō hall, but only for invited persons with special relations to the institution (*kankeisha*): the abbot, the priests from the subtemples, and the local Musō Kyōkai group. A third separate ritual—often conceptually and ritually identical to *obon*—also related to death is *segaki-e* 施餓鬼会, the ritual of "feeding the hungry spirits" (餓鬼 *gaki*, Sanskr. *preta*), wandering ghosts who cannot or will not leave this world.[163] *Gaki* is semantically identical to *muenbotoke*. Upon death one is called Buddha (仏 *hotoke*), those with relatives to memorialize them having relations called "Buddha with relation" (有縁仏 *uenbotoke*), and those without called "Buddha without relation" (無縁仏 *muenbotoke*). Being outside the extended family they are dangerous in being able to send curses (*tatari*). As family and social structure in many ways reflect cosmology and the ontology of ancestorhood, they are also ghosts in being the negative results of an unsuccessful life. Unmarried women, siblings, persons dying in a state of jealousy, rage, resentment, or melancholy, and those who have died a tragic death (suicide, accidents) are categories of persons who have not lived a proper life and/or are outside of proper category, doomed a pitiful existence drifting in a

[161] Jizō is the Japanese name for the Indian Bodhisattva Ksitigarba. Jizō has in Japan gained popularity and independence as an individual deity, though he also plays different roles as Bodhisattva, e.g., as Amida Buddha's assistant.

[162] The "thousand lantern memorial service" (*sentō kuyō*) at Adashino-Nembutsuji in northwestern Kyoto is particularly popular among adherents and tourists. At Osorezan in northern Honshū, the dramatic landscape of hills, rocks, a sulphur lake, and a river has been mandalized into a Buddhist cosmos, the lakeshore called the "shore of paradise" and the river being Sai no Kawara ("dry riverbank"), the river of death separating this from the other world. At *jizōbon*, this large and impressive scenery—which is part of a Sōtō Zen temple—is crowded with people making all sorts of offerings to Jizō, some of them carried by small toy boats symbolically crossing to the other shore (*higan*).

[163] Also the origin of *segaki-e* has been debated, but the Buddhist version of the apparent original ceremony of offering food to monks for the benefit of hungry spirits also has its textual legitimation. A pamphlet in English from Engakuji in Kamakura translates this ritual as Thanksgiving Day.

betwixt-and-between state.[164] The conceptual compartmentalization of different kinds of deaths (the normal dead, the too-early-dead, the lonely dead) is thus also reflecting levels of life, being temporally divided as both separate and related rituals, and spatially mandalized. Concerning the latter, thresholds at *obon, jizōbon* and *segaki-e* are significant symbols, also whether or not offerings to the hungry spirits at the temple gate (*sanmon segaki-e*) are understood to be ritual dramatizations of Buddhist or folk narratives. Although all three events in the publications from Myōshinji are related to caring and showing gratitude for the ancestors, they also prescribe their relevance in ethical and soteriological domains. Just as *obon* is seen as a whole week of repaying favors to parents and ancestors and for general reflection of the interrelatedness of all being, *segaki-e* is the time of showing and cultivating compassion, of honoring the virtues of Buddha and praying for accomplishing the Buddha way, and an occasion for the priests to explain the meaning of coexistence and salvation.[165]

Pilgrimage

While principally a religious practice to be conducted throughout the year, pilgrimage in reality is a seasonally conditioned activity, summer and the time when cherry and maple trees are in bloom being the most densely populated times.

Pilgrimage and the "path theory" of the Buddhist way (*mārga*) has often been the travel metaphor for Buddhist practice (Bielefeldt 2005, 237). Soteriological emphasis has also been put on the practice in a Japanese context, but more often it has been related to more mundane aspects. In a Myōshinji context, pilgrimage (巡礼 *junrei*) is sometimes referred to as the religious practice of visiting temples (参拝行事 *sanpai gyōji*) or simply educational travel (研修旅行, *kenshū ryokō, Hakusho*, 91). Visiting (Zen) temples in one guidebook for priests is described as a travel of the heart/mind (心の旅) which refines the religious character and generates merit (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 214), and in a book aimed at Hanazonokai members pilgrimage is defined as visiting "holy places

---

[164] See Ooms 1976, 71 and Smith 1974, 41. A special kind of *muenbotoke* are corpses found at sea (*nagare-botoke*, "floating Buddhas") whose spirits are thought to be the messengers or servants of some major god (ibid. 45).Although being betwixt and between, dead children or aborted fetuses are usually not considered *gaki*, being too young to have developed a functioning (and potentially harmful) soul.

[165] See *obon* pamphlet, *Josei no bukkyō* 4, 36, *Hanazono Q & A*, 199, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 50, *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211.

of patriarchs or sacred sites with enshrined Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, chanting *goeika*, and while purifying one's sins, praying for salvation" (*Zen Q and A*, 153). While pilgrimage to foreign holy places is also an activity for Japanese Buddhists and Hanazonokai members,[166] Zen (and Myōshinji affiliated) temples too are listed in some of the many general guidebooks to holy places within Japan, some of these being parts of related pilgrimage networks.[167] An example of this is pilgrimage networks centering around the Seven Gods of Good Fortune (七福人 *shichi fukujin*), "a multicultural, mixed gender, and religiously diverse group of deities who share the common cause of providing benefits to people" (Reader and Tanabe 1998, 157). As Hotei is often associated with Zen,[168] he is the central figure at Manpukuji in a transsectarian pilgrimage in and around Kyoto dedicated to these gods, and in the Zen temple complex Tenryūji in Kyoto the seven gods are represented in seven subtemples, during *setsubun* being displayed as objects of veneration and granters of merit and benefits.

---

[166] I have met quite a few Japanese pilgrims in Sarnath, outside of present-day Varanasi, and in Bodhgaya. The famous monks Shaku Sōen and Kawaguchi Ekai in the nineteenth century went there to find "true Buddhism," the former also being a monk in Ceylon, the latter traveling in Tibet (Borup 2004). Tibet has become an exotic and mystic place in Japanese mental geography, partly because of Western influence. In China the temples associated with figures such as Bodhidharma, Huineng, and Linji have been goals of interest and pilgrimage for Zen Buddhists.The pamphlet *Hanazono* briefly describes some of the guided pilgrimage tours for the Hanazonokai members to foreign Buddhist places—e.g., "Sri Lanka, a travel to the homeland of the spirit" スリランカ・魂のふるさとへの旅, written by a member of Myōshinji Taishū Zendō and brought as a series in 1995 through 1997. In 1985 the Nihon Daruma Kai (see 237) arranged a pilgrimage to Shaolin temple in China, bringing as a gift a large wooden image of Daruma seated in meditation.

[167] In some of the guidebooks I have come across, Zen temples are generally not as well represented as, for instance, Pure Land, Shingon, or Tendai temples—though quite a few Sōtō temples are depicted as sacred places in transsectarian pilgrimage networks. In one book on temples and shrines with possibilities of acquiring *riyaku* (Yoritomi and Shiraki 1993) Engakuji, Tōfukuji, and Tenryūji from the Rinzai lineage are mentioned. In a publication from Myōshinji (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu* 2, 40–51) three pilgrimage routes are depicted, none of them containing any Rinzai Zen temples. Two Myōshinji temples are part of the 88 temples Shikoku pilgrimage route (Fujiji near Tokushima and Sekkeiji near Kōchi), and 19 of the Minō Saikoku route of 33 Kannon temples belong to Myōshinji (www10.ocn.ne.jp/~mk123456/mino.htm lists all the temples). Within the Myōshinji temple complex in Kyoto there is a graveyard containing a bone believed to be a relic of Buddha, "and this relic acts as a symbol of power able to guard over and protect the spirits of those who acquire graves at this site" (Reader 1991, 98).

[168] Hotei is the god of contentment, but also a human Bodhisattva and the figure of the last picture of the ten ox-herding pictures.

In 1988 a group of seven Myōshinji temples around the Kiso area established their own pilgrimage route dedicated to these gods.[169] The temples are relatively close to each other and to the railway, attributes also being emphasized in the pilgrimage pamphlet that praises not only the ability of the sacred places (*reijō*) to extinguish the seven disasters and generate the seven kinds of luck (the number seven naturally related to the number of the gods), but also the quality of being an easily manageable and accessible pilgrimage to be done in one day. In each of the temples one or all the gods are displayed. and some temples have small shops selling amulets and figures with the gods. Pilgrimage sites and routes can be significant sources of income, as is the case with one temple (Kōzenji) that I visited, partly because of its beautiful garden, its many *danka*, and its many pilgrimage visitors (2,000–3000 every year, the priest estimated).

Sectarian and Buddhist calendrical rituals

The yearly rituals commemorating Buddha, the patriarchs, the founder, and the patrons of the sect are highly valued as the spiritual ancestors of the institutional family. Although not all temples celebrate these occasions, priests from subtemples and (at larger assemblies also from) branch temples gather at the *honzan* to perform these memorial services as separate and yet Buddhologically related rituals.

Contrary to southern Buddhist countries in which the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha is celebrated on the same day as Wesak Puja on the full moon of the month of Wesak, all three events (三仏忌 *sanbutsuki*) have their separate ritual days in Japan.

The celebration of the birth of Buddha (誕生会 *tanjō*-e 降誕会 *kōtan-e*) on the eighth of April is an occasion for the local priest to tell myths from the popular *jataka*, and to talk about the meaning of life (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 210 and *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 84). A small statue of the human Buddha (*ningen shakason*) or the newborn Buddha (*tanjō butsu*) is on special display in or outside the temples this day, being the object of a rite of pouring tea on the Buddha (*kanbutsu-e* or *yokubutsu-e*).[170] The sweet tea (*amacha*) is a symbolic substitute for perfume said to be poured on him at his birth by heavenly beings, and it is common ritual knowledge

[169] The names of the temples are Kōzenji, Rinsenji, Jōshōji, Myōkakuji, Kōtokuji, Daihoji, Tokuonji, and Kōfukuji.

[170] This ritual was described already in the Kashmiri *Nilamantapurāna* (Todd 1993, 319).

for many that the tea having been poured over the statue and rubbed on one's own body is both healing and purifying, and itself a prayer for acquiring Buddha's wisdom (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 55). While not all temples have such a statue, others are known for them. The Buddha statue at the Rinzai temple Ginkakuji had plenty of tea at this occasion, whereas the one being revealed at the Myōshinji *honzan* might have received the same amount, but, since the ritual was conducted behind closed gates in the *butsuden*, only from the performing priests. Buddha's birthday is most often known as *hanamatsuri*, the feast of flowers. That not all people associate the flower festival with Buddha and Buddhism is, of course, an opportunity for the institution through pamphlets and in the periodic *Hanazono* to point this out, using the flower metaphor for the ideal of inner cultivation and purification.[171]

Jōdō-e (成道会), the eighth of December, is Buddha's Enlightenment Day or Bodhi Day. It is celebrated in the monasteries during *rōhatsu sesshin* as a ritual enactment of a paradigmatic mythical and doctrinal theme, and "compared to other sects this ceremony is more important to the Zen sect" (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211) and considered "the most important ritual of the Zen sect" (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 84). A picture or scroll of a meditating Buddha may be hung up and venerated, and explaining the enlightenment story and encouraging to extinguish passions and egoistic self and searching for one's own enlightenment while "repaying" the Buddha are some of the efforts of cultivating the laity, who on this day will have a chance also to renew their faith and commitment to being a Buddhist.[172]

The death, or *parinirvana*, of Buddha is celebrated as *nehan-e* (涅槃会, "Nirvana Day") on the 15th of February. Also, this day is Buddhologically important, being an occasion for learning about the meaning of Buddha's nirvana and about death and suffering as elements to value and with which to reflect on the meaning of life (*Nehan* pamphlet). The virtue of Śākyamuni Buddha is recalled (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 22), physically represented by the perhaps most venerated illustration of Buddha, lying

[171] This refers to the flower-covered shrine (*hanamidō*) with the statue of the Buddha, itself a symbolic copy of Lumbini Garden, where gods, according to legend, let flowers fall on the baby Buddha. In China this day is also a popular time for the release of living beings into the water or air. I have seen this ceremony (*hōjō-e*) a couple of times in autumn, with priests releasing fish into the Kamogawa river. I have never observed it as related to the ceremony of Buddha's birth, nor conducted at any Japanese Zen temples or by Zen priests.

[172] See *Zau*, 48, *Josei no bukkyō* 4, 60, *Shingyō kyōten*, 198, and *jōdō-e* pamphlet.

on his right side surrounded by his grieving disciples.[173] Hanging up a large nirvana scroll (*nehanzu*) in the dharma hall at the *honzan* serves both as a central ritual object in the commemorative service held by the priests of the sub- and local temples, and as an event for art-interested visitors to see treasures usually hidden away (e.g., the impressive *nehanzu* at Tōfukuji in Kyoto).

Memorial days of patriarchs and sect founders

Each Buddhist sect has its own memorial days of important individuals. The Zen sects hold ceremonies for those patriarchs they have in common (Daruma, Hyakujō), the Rinzai sects for Rinzai, and Myōshinji also for their sect founder (*kaisan*) Kanzan Egen and emperor Hanazono as the temple builder (*kaiki*).[174] Although memorial days of the founding patriarchs are celebrated as part of an important ritual complex of "two patriarchs and three celebrations of Buddha" (二祖三仏忌 *niso sambutsuki*)—upon each of which also the laity should pay respect and return received gratitude (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 55), learn about the transmission of the dharma and the lineage (*Jūshoku oboegaki*, 84), ideally participate in a *zazenkai* (*Zau*, 48), and vow to practice for one's own enlightenment (*Zen Q & A*, 151)—these are not occasions at which the laity flock to the temples. Like the memorial ceremonies of Buddha (of which I have observed two each at Myōshinji and Daitokuji), *darumaki, rinzaiki* and *hyakujōki* are solemn and isolated clerical events conducted inside the *honzan* buildings with priests from the subtemples meeting to pay respect and vowing to follow their examples in cultivating themselves and in propagating the dharma. The abbot makes the offerings and prostrations in front of the main altar, and the sutra recitation by the ceremonial leader (*inō*), the chanting by all priests while circumambulating in rows (行道 *gyōdō*, "ceremonial walking"), and the noise of the few passers-by throwing coins in the box for money offerings (賽銭箱 *saisen hako*) are the only instances breaking the silence of these very formal and aesthetically beautiful, but otherwise "closed" rituals. The *kaisanki*, which I have observed at both Myōshinji, Daitokuji, and the

---

[173] This particular scene has found many different expressions by different artists, one of the more extraordinary being Jitō Jakuchū with his "Vegetable Nirvana" (Kyoto Museum owns this; it can be seen at its homepage: www.kyohaku.go.jp/tokuten/jakuchu/hp9_85e.htm).

[174] In Myōshinji, *darumaki* is celebrated on the 5th of October, *hyakujōki* on the 17th of January, *rinzaiki* on the tenth of January, *kaisanki* on the 12th of December, and *kaiki* (or *hō-ōki*) on the 11th of November.

Ōbaku temple Manpukuji, are even more formal and performative of nature. These are announced and often also reported in Buddhist and local newspapers, and invitations are sent to priests of branch temples, to priests from other sects, and to some of the top people in the area. This is the opportunity for the sect as the Great Tradition to perform in public in front of the passively watching audience, whose physical placements according to rank and/or institutional importance mirror the status performances of the priests, revealed by robes and position in the processions. Such is also the larger ceremonies (遠諱 *onki*) held every fifty years in commemoration of the abovementioned figures, especially Hanazono and Kaisan Musō Daishi. These are prepared years ahead, and the central ceremonies have been accompanied by different kinds of activities and campaigns to promote the institution. The fighter planes for the army in 1945 were dedicated as a gift celebrating Hanazono's 600th death anniversary. In 1995 times had changed, and one of the main activities of the 650th anniversary was an "ordinary temple meditation session for believers."[175] Preparations for Kaisan Musō Daishi's 650th death anniversary in 2009 has been planned for a long time (www.myoshin.com/onki/index.html).

Another kind of yearly ceremonial events at the *honzan* are the Great Assemblies (*daikai*) of the various lay groups within the institution. Clerical representatives are also present and play a significant role, but at such occasions the lay participants are the active performers. From the 7th to the 13th of October 2000 the annual general assembly of the Musō Kyōkai was an even more spectacular event, the celebration of its 50th anniversary.[176]

Each morning and afternoon for a whole week groups of approximately 800 people from the Myōshinji parishes arrived in buses from all over the country—making a total of more than 9,000 participants—to join the tightly scheduled ceremony. Most participants were women well beyond their fifties, arriving in the typical Musō Kyōkai uniforms: white shirts and black skirts or purple *kimono*, the bag (*rakusu*) hanging around the neck. The Assembly Hall (*Kaikan*) shop had moved out in front of the headquarters building, selling books, amulets, incense, snacks, bags, and coffee to those interested in bringing back ritual items or souvenirs

---

[175] *Ippan jiin danshinto hō-on sesshin* (*Shōbōrin* 1996, 11:2).

[176] The name of the ceremony was *Dai 50 Kai Kinen Daikai Zenkoku Hōei Daikai*. A program containing a schedule and lists of members was given to each participant (*Daikai*).

from the *honzan*. Having registered and been guided (by some of the assisting conductors) through the trails of the monastic complex to outside the dharma hall, all members lined up in groups for the obligatory photos with the priest in the middle. Inside the crowded dharma hall everyone was seated in *seiza* position, first listening to a priest from the *honzan* reading and explaining the Buddhist precepts, after which high-ranking priests arrived silently, positioning themselves facing each other in two lines in front of the main altar (*shumidan*). All chanted the *Heart Sutra*, extracts from the *Lotus Sutra*, an *ekō* to the founder of the sect, a purificatory (*sange*) *wasan*, and the Mahayana Buddhist precepts. The abbot arrived, bowing to the priests and making prostrations in front of the altar,[177] after which there were speeches and greetings, and a few of the older members were honored for having attended the yearly assembly for their fortieth or fiftieth time. The rituals continued in three different halls, in which each local group performed an *eika* and/or a *wasan* (e.g., *Hakuin zenji zazen wasan, Shūmon anjinshō, Seikatsu shinjō*), singing and rhythmically beating a small bell with a metal stick. When all groups had performed and received applause, a common meeting was held at the end of each day's schedule for all participants, in which each group was individually praised and encouraged to keep on practicing. As an important symbol of the special occasion and of being a true member of the sect, all were given a *kechimyaku* (血脈 "blood vessel"). A *kechimyaku* is a certificate given only at special occasions, symbolizing one's genealogical belonging to the Buddhist family. The certificate in a simplified lineage states and honors the names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the refuges, the Bodhisattva precepts, and the stamp of the abbot. It is a square-shaped, folded paper with graphical illustrations,[178] and though it does not have the same significance any longer, it is not supposed to be opened, but rather functions as an amulet and a ritual and institutional symbol.[179] I heard many greetings of *otsukaresama* ("thanks for your hard work") before everyone was greeted farewell by priests and assisting helpers from the *honzan*, wavering and bowing while the buses left the crowded parking lot.

[177] Called *kegyō*, "a preparatory practice for attaining Buddhahood" (*Daikai*, 5).

[178] The *kechimyaku* is not as elaborate as the ones used in the Sōtō lineage, in which all patriarchs since Śākyamuni are written, ending with a blank spot on which one can write one's own name to indicate one's belonging to the genealogy.

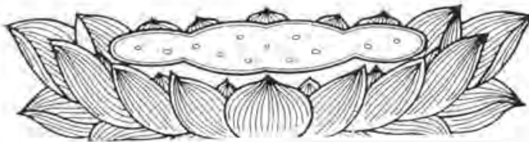
[179] Multiple mass ordinations were known also in the Tokugawa period, probably because of "the popular belief that the more Zen lineage charts one collected, the more talismanic protection one would receive" (Williams 2005, 27).

禪門相承菩薩大戒

三國傳來祖師菩薩
南無過去莊嚴光佛
南無十方諸佛證戒師
南無文殊師利菩薩羯磨阿闍梨
南無毘盧舍那佛
南無釋迦牟尼佛
南無彌勒菩薩教授阿闍梨
南無十方諸菩薩同學侶
南無未來賢劫千佛
護戒善神諸天菩薩

南無歸依佛 南無歸依法 南
無歸依僧 歸依佛無上尊 歸依法離
欲尊 歸依僧和合尊 歸依佛竟 歸依
法竟 歸依僧竟 如來至真等正覺 是我大
師 我今歸依 從今以往 稱佛爲師 更不
歸依 邪魔外道慈愍故 慈愍故 大慈愍故
如上禁戒佛祖的々相承到山野 山僧今付屬汝
汝從今身到佛身迄能可護持

傳燈大乘菩薩戒
比丘妙心寺管長
附屬菩薩弟子某



Kechimyaku (from Myōshinji Shūmō honjō).

Statistics and semantics of calendrical rituals

Chanting *eika* is seen by most of the respondents participating in this ceremony to be relatively meritorious. 4.9% placed it at the top of a list of eleven practices, exceeding (alms-) giving (*fuse*), calendrical rituals, funerals, keeping the precepts (*jikai*), pure faith (*shinjin*), and (being engaged in the) Okagasama movement; and 29.3% placed it among the three most meritorious practices, exceeding also sutra copying and *zazen*. Another important reason for joining such assemblies is the social dimension. This was clearly expressed by some of the members participating in this and other Musō Kyōkai gatherings, which I have seen performed at several occasions. The relatively high frequency of permanent attendance—29.3% of the respondents had participated forty times or more within the last year[180]—suggests the social dimension is also of institutional relevance, with networks being tied between the individuals of the local groups, between the parishes, between members and priests, and between individuals, groups, and the headquarters/institution. Such anniversary assemblies at the *honzan* are different from the local gatherings in being both more formal and performative—both in the sense of staged performance in which there are elements of aesthetic awareness, competition, and entertainment, but also in the sense of displaying and communicating institutional identity and commitment. The *goeikakai* members performed according to almost minutely prescribed forms with which they seemed to seriously identify themselves. The priests—as in other *honzan* ceremonies—performed as priests, as the religious authority representing institution and tradition, giving ritual services and material recognition (by the *kechimyaku*). But they were also the humble persons smiling, bowing, thanking, encouraging, and personally showing interest in this large group, which constitutes a significant part of the lay community—the exchange of performances with which the institution is based.

Annual assemblies of institutionally established groups are well visited and generally considered more or less obligatory. While in theory it is totally optional for the local priests to decide what kind of, and to which extent, they will open the temples for conducting rituals and holding assemblies, institutional politics and the demands of the local community in reality often mean that each priest will feel calendrical

[180] There was no correlation between frequency of attendance and evaluation of merit in these data from my own surveys.

rituals to be more or less obligatory events. But not all kinds of ritual are of equal importance. Although memorial services of the religious figureheads have a certain institutional significance, they seem not to be popular among the laity. When less than half of the most active lay members know who the sect founder is,[181] it is of course relevant to ask how many of the typical Myōshinji *danka* would have the slightest interest in participating in (or knowing about) a memorial service for Hyakujō, whom I presume only a minority would even know the name of. In a survey from 2002, 25.4% of the temple priests conducted special rituals at *kaisanki* and 25.5% at *darumaki* (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 83). This corresponds to the abovementioned active devotees, of whom 20.3% claimed to have participated at *kaisanki* and 12.4% at *darumaki* (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 4). Of the Buddha memorial services, 57.2% of the responding priests celebrated his birthday, 26.6% his enlightenment, and 38.5% his death (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 83), corresponding to respectively 22.7%, 6.7%, and 10.6% of lay persons participating in these rituals (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 4). *Obon, segaki-e,* New Year, and the two equinox celebrations (*higan-e*) are generally far better represented by both priests conducting services and the laity participating. *Segaki-e* is held by 83.3% of the temples, *obon* by 50.8%, the three New Year's celebrations *daihannya* (see above), *hatsumōde* (visiting the temple at New Year), and *shōgatsu hōyō* (New Year's memorial services) by respectively 38.5%, 31.7% and 25.3%,[182] and *higan-e* by 57.7% (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 83).[183] This corresponds to 58% participating in *segaki-e*, 67.1% in *obon*, 29.4% in *daihannya-e* and 55.6% in *higan-e* (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 4).

---

[181] *Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 7.5% answered affirmatively, 33% negatively, and 17% did not reply. The latter figure I think suggests that the actual number of people not knowing him is higher. As mentioned, the questionnaire was only given to participants at *honzan* assemblies, which is why I consider them more active *danshinto* than the average members. In a survey from the Sōtō school, 72.1% of the respondents did not know who the two sect founders were (SSSMC 1993, 116).

[182] Visiting a shrine or temple at New Year is a practice followed by two-thirds of the population (Reader 1991, 10, referring to statistics released each year by the Japanese police). However, as Reader and Tanabe (1998, 267 n21) also suggest, the figures might be lower, since many visit several temples and shrines the same day(s). Smaller surveys have given numbers of up to 93% participating in New Year's celebrations, 60.3% in *obon*, and 79.1% in Christmas (Ishii 1997a, 62–63).

[183] In a survey from 1990 the percentages are respectively 88.2% (*segaki-e*), 66.6% (*hanamatsuri*), 53.1% (*nehan-e*), 45.5% (*daihannya-e*), 43.9% (*jōdō-e*), 32.3% (*kaisanki*), and 39.2% (*darumaki*). Because of errors, no data was given for higan-e, whereas the memorial day of Rinzai (*rinzaiki*) was conducted by 16.8% (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 177).

Thus the figures clearly suggest that the more institutionally related rituals are less popular than the more seasonally related events. As in other "religions of the book," the rituals considered theologically most important are not necessarily the most popular. This is also suggested by my own surveys, in which New Year, *obon*, and *higan-e* were ascribed much more importance than the memorial rituals of Buddha, Daruma, and the sect founder. These more common rituals are closely related to seasonal change—oscillating between rituals of "life" (New Year) and "death" (*higan*), with *obon* both temporally and semantically halfway between—and ancestor worship, though even the *nisō sanbutsuki* in one guidebook for priests are said to be true Zen rituals having been turned into services for the ancestors (*senso kuyō, Jūshokugaku kōza*, 211).

At local temples, calendrical rituals are often occasions on which to gather the community for other social and religious activities. For instance, dharma talks are often held at spring equinox and at Buddha's birthday (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 4, 186), the latter of which is also a typical occasion for *kodomokai* to gather (ibid. 181). Also, although the memorial days of Śākyamuni Buddha are equal parts of the same legendary narrative; the difference in attendance also shows difference of ritual "type." Both *jōdō-e* in the dark winter, encouraging to inner contemplation, and *nehan-e*, related to (not personal but metaphorical) death, are associated more with the "serious" dharma aspects of Buddhism. On the other hand, Buddha's birth as the popular *hanamatsuri* in spring is an outdoor activity with metaphors of light, flowers, and the innocence of children (*hanamatsuri* pamphlet) venerating the human and baby Buddha, often being celebrated with friends indicating that "different social groupings are at the center of different festival observances" (Ishii 1997b, 6). This is also suggested in my surveys by the different frequency of attending and value given to the different kinds of ritual types. None of the participants from the *zazenkai* had attended a calendrical ritual within the last year, whereas in the *sesshin* the same figure was 75% of students from lay families and 50% of students from temple families. Of the students in Buddhist studies, 87.3% had not participated in any religious activities at all, whereas 3.6% had attended some kind of calendrical ritual. The low figures of especially the latter group (students of Buddhism) might be due to the fact that *nenjū gyōji* was not defined; perhaps not all would identify New Year or *obon* as such. The evaluation of different calendrical rituals also differed between temple sons and children from lay families, just like the *zazenkai* participants and Musō Kyōkai members ascribed different importance and meritorious value

to them.[184] In general, with respect to calendrical rituals, those tending to value them most and giving also sectarian rituals high priority are temple sons, priests, and the "active members"—i.e., those with a strong institutional affiliation—whereas those interested in particular (noncalendrical) rituals (*zazen*/*zazenkai* participants and to a lesser extent *eika*/Musō Kyōkai) show less interest in them, with the children of lay families being in between.[185]

Not all religious participation is necessarily felt to inscribe the same level and kind of meaning to all participants. Just as Valentine's Day, White Day, Girl's day, Boy's Day, or Christmas (more often celebrated in shopping malls than in temples, shrines, and churches) to many are counted as equal kinds of occasions with the only object to give and receive gifts so "the fact that temple bells toll through the night [...] does not mean at all [...] that we Japanese have a common Buddhist faith and understanding of the Buddhist concept of 'human passions'" (Ishii 1997b, 9). To many adherents, calendrical rituals are mostly experienced as social events with no more or less meaning or feeling attached to them than other cultural or national holidays.[186] Calendrical rituals also mean leisure, being moments of joy and play. This was evident also in the *goeikakai* ceremony at the *honzan*, where formal procedures, uniforms, and codes were as much part of an institutionalized pilgrimage to the sacred main center, an important and yet joyful spiritual and social event from which the participants probably experienced long-lasting benefits and memories. Pilgrimage, children's *zazenkai*, contemplating on Zen gardens, paying homage to Buddha statues, or visiting the family grave are activities not in themselves depending on or related to any specific time, but which during specific seasonal periods are more frequent, perhaps because such times—like religious

[184] Whereas 13.5% of the *sesshin* participants (19.4% from temple families and 10.7% from lay families) gave calendrical rituals top rank in measuring merit and 25.8% valued it among the three highest ranks, the numbers were only 0% and 4.2% in the *zazenkai* group and 2.4% and 9.4% among the Musō Kyōkai members.

[185] General tendencies of the surveys showed the Musō Kyōkai members to favor worship, *eika*, memorial surveys, and *zazen*, the *zazenkai* participants to favor *zazen* and much less giving (fuse), worship, sutra copying, and memorial services, whereas the *sesshin* participants favored *zazen*, sutra copying, worship, and memorial services.

[186] Although cultural and national holidays are also seen as occasions at which to promote the institution, I have never seen any rituals conducted at Zen temples on such days. Nor have I seen Christmas or any Shinto holidays being incorporated in Myōshinji ideology or practice, though their members of course might celebrate these in other religious or secular contexts.

places—have a certain quality of leisure, excess, and extension.[187] While rituals need not be ascribed much religious meaning, it is also true that the playfulness of ritual does not make it less religious.[188] On the contrary, play is an important aspect of most religious activities. Play is a means of personal joy. But it is also a means of forgetting oneself, both in the Buddhist sense of transcending oneself and in Humphrey and Laidlaw's sense of seeing rituals as archetypal structures and activities to which one commits and submits oneself—regardless, or only of secondary importance, how much meaning one ascribes to them, how much soteriological significance is ascribed to buddhizing natural time or naturalizing Buddhist rituals.

3.6.5 *Local Zen folk rituals*

Bodhidharma as a good-luck charm, circumambulating the toilets to prevent diseases, being tapped on the shoulders by the enlightenment stick to be healed. It does not really sound "Zen," but it is. This chapter describes two cases of local religious festivals. They are local in the sense that they are singular and unique and not part of the general ritual scheme of the institution. They are thus not described in any written materials, nor are they within the framework of specific institutional codes, though hermeneutical strategies are also of interest to some of the agents. Both festivals are interesting in that they are uniquely "Zen" and "folk." They are held at prestigious Zen temples with different agents participating and with several kinds of rituals (and correspondingly with different possible hermeneutical layers). The festivals and the religious contexts of which they are a part will be discussed in detail before discussing their placement within their overall ritual and institutional relevance.

Daruma-cults and festivals

The legendary founder of the Zen traditions, Bodhidharma, was foremost a wise meditation master, a strict patriarch, and a symbol of preinstitutional Zen Buddhism, in which he played a significant role as a textual paradigm. In China he was also a thaumaturge, a Daoist

[187] Each season has its characteristics, but New Year, summer, and the short periods in spring (when the cherry trees blossom) and autumn (when the maple trees are in full bloom and Tōfukuji in particular is crowded with tourists) are especially attractive for activities like the abovementioned.

[188] On Buddhism and "the work of play," see Sharf 2005, 253–57.

immortal, and an avatar of the Chinese Avalokiteshvara, Guanyin (Faure 1991, 105). In Japan his resurrection, his crossing over to Japan, and his meeting with Shōtoku Taishi were recorded in the chronicle Nihon Shoki, suggesting the supernatural powers of a figure whose Japanese name, Daruma (だるま), is known to most Japanese as opposed to his more "scholastic" transcription of the Indian name, Bodaidaruma (菩提達磨). Some performers of martial arts attribute him with being the founder of Shaolin Kung Fu, the name Shaolin being the temple in China where he was said to live and work. Most Japanese recognize him as a popular object of artful creativity, in which he has been depicted as a serious meditating master, wild savage, drag, or snowman,[189] and it is no exaggeration to call him "an Asian approximation of Humpty-Dumpty" (Faure 1991, 117). Art (and kitsch) collectors can thank Daruma for many precious pieces of work, as can the whole business industry producing, marketing, and selling Darumas, whether his name connotes relation to Zen or not.[190] But contrary to other Zen figures who have "turned popular,"[191] Daruma is also a ritual object used in religious or semireligious contexts. Daruma can be seen depicted on amulets (*omamori*) and votive tablets (*ema*) and most often as a papier-mâché doll in the *okiagari-koboshi* ("getting-up little priest") type, referring to a doll with no hands, but with a weighted lower section that makes it spring back up again when an attempt is made to push it over, symbolizing a Japanese ideal of invincible determination by the saying "fall down seven times, rise eight times" (*nanakorobi yaoki*). The numbers refer to a legend in which Bodhidharma was poisoned seven times by people opposed to his spreading of the teaching, after which he roused himself eight times to continue his mission. According to the priest at one Daruma temple (see below), the Japanese people needed to rise again after the sufferings of World War II, just like the always-rising *okiagari Daruma*—the ideology of which has inspired the temple to see itself as an original training hall (*konpon dōjō*) of the movement of "get up Daruma" (*okiagari Daruma*), manifested by their telephone number ending with 7878 (Darumadera pamphlet).

---

[189] *Yuki-daruma* ("snow-Daruma") is the common word in Japanese for snowman. On Daruma, see also Yanagida 1981.

[190] McFarland in 1987 wrote that there were about 4,500 shops and other business throughout Japan bearing the name Daruma (1987, 110).

[191] Ikkyū in particular have been the subject of many cartoons (*manga*); but also, masterfully illustrated volumes on the life of Hakuin have been published by Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho.

The good-fortune-Daruma (*fuku daruma* or *enki daruma*) or wish-Daruma (*onegai daruma*) is used in several ritual occasions at both (Zen) Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines as an object with which to achieve this-worldly benefits. One such way is the custom of buying a consecrated papier-mâché doll with eyes left unpainted. In making a wish the left eye is painted, and when the wish has come true the right eye is painted. This custom is also used in election campaigns, after which a Daruma with both eyes painted is a symbol of victory and power, playing with the associations of divine protection; similarly a large Daruma appears in front of some police stations in Kyoto, one of them bearing a large sticker warning people to wear their seat belts. When the dolls have served their purpose they are, together with amulets and votive tablets, returned to the temple or shrine where they were bought in order to be burned—a ritual (*yaki kuyō*) performed both to express gratitude for the benefits received from Daruma and itself an instrumental action to gain further benefits. The paradox of symbolically bringing to life (painting the eyes) the doll and handing it in for destruction *after* having received its favors is, contrary to the permanent Buddha and Daruma statues in the temples, part of the ongoing exchange between both believer and Daruma, between buyer and seller, in which most purchase a new doll.

Daruma dolls can be bought throughout the year at certain temples, shrines, or shops, but especially on New Year's they are sold at so-called Daruma markets (*Daruma ichi*). Thousands of Daruma dolls are sold at stalls lined up inside the temple grounds of Zen sects,[192] and to some temples and communities such markets are both strong markers of identity and a major source of income. The Rinzai Zen temple Shōrin-zan in Gunma prefecture is perhaps the most famous one, tradition also saying that the papier mâché originated here in the eighteenth century (McFarland 1987, 99). Some Zen temples store collections of Daruma dolls and statues, one of them being "Daruma-dera" in Kyoto (see below), and in Ryōtanji in Hikone a large variety of figures are exhibited, special Daruma *ema* are sold, and each year in April the temple conducts its own Daruma festival. Attracting more visitors and

[192] The largest Daruma market in Tokyo, for instance, is held at a Tendai temple (Mc Farland 1987, 104). Tozuka Daruma Factory produces millions of Daruma dolls each year (www.darumanetjapan.com).

spreading the messages of Zen Buddhist and Japanese culture was behind the formation in 1984 of the Japan Daruma Association (Nihon Daruma Kai). The aim was to "create and honor Daruma as a symbol of certain virtues and values that they perceive as critically important to the development of harmony in the contemporary world" (McFarland 1987, 110). The group now consists of twenty temples, most of them belonging to the Myōshinji sect.

One of them is Yūtoku-zan Empukuji (see 239), another is Daihō-zan Hōrinji in Kyoto. Hōrinji (法輪寺) was established in the 1718 by Daigu Shūsaku Zenji and enlarged by the priest Makai, who in ten years completed all the buildings. Since the priest, writer, and scholar Izan in 1933 took initiatives to popularize Zen Buddhism by later building a Daruma hall, now housing more than 10,000 Darumas in all sizes, the temple has simply been known as the Daruma temple (Daruma-dera). Also at the temple is a teaching school, and a hall in which to practice, *shaolin kung fu* (J. *shōrinji kempō*), was opened to encourage the relation between Zen Buddhism and martial arts through Bodhidharma, the legendary founder of both.[193] As Izan had close relations to the first Japanese film company, Daimai, there are 400 people from the film industry enshrined at the temple, and yearly memorial services are still conducted for them. Another feature of the temple is the art collection shown in the main hall.

The former priest Sanō Taigi (b. 1918) is himself a skilled artist. He is one of the best-known *bokuseki* (ink writing) artists in the country and has his private works of art exhibited in galleries and published in books. Sanō's own disciple, Sanō Taiten, who took the family name from his master, is not an artist himself but sees one of his main aims, as the present priest at the temple, being to preserve and treasure the art and Daruma collection. I have met him several times, both at Hanazono University, where he, like his predecessor Sano Taigi, has a teaching position, and at the temple, which is also known for a special religious festival at *setsubun*.

The temple itself has only 250 parishioners (*danka*), but during the three days of *setsubun* up to 30,000 people from all over the country come to join the festival, which I observed myself in 1997. Crowds of

[193] The *shōrinji kempō* hall is now an independent *shūkyō hōjin* (see 30) named Kongōzen, situated in Shikoku.

people entered the decorated gate, behind which a large container was placed, piled up with used dolls, *omamori* and *ema* introducing the first ritual activities. Next to a small stand with local *danka* serving tea, a large Daruma doll was fully covered with small sheets of paper (fortune tags, 海運札 *kaiun fuda*) on which were written wishes and names of the purchasers. A board showing the "unlucky years" (*yakudoshi*) warned men and women at specific ages to be extra careful; it was strategically placed in front of an open tent in which elderly women on the one side had small stalls with Daruma dolls, *ema*s, and lottery tickets for prizes (with absolutely no relation to Zen and the temple) to be collected in the main building. On the other side was a line of seated priests, who were sitting consecrating the purchased Daruma dolls by writing calligraphy on them and filling out application sheets for prayers (*kitō moshikomi*) from the visitors. The sheets were to be filled out with name and address and the desired object of prayer, of which a line of sixteen suggestions was listed, consisting of the following items: prevention of danger, peace and harmony in the family, trade prosperity, traffic security, healthy body and mind, certainty of success, progress in study, recovery from illness, prevention of senility, making good marriage, being blessed with (many) children, safe birth, achievement of one's aims, accomplishment of business, proficiency in art, certainty of victory, and "other." The Daruma dolls and prayer sheets were taken into the adjoining Daruma hall where the priests took their turn in pairs, one beating the drum and the other, while holding the objects (the doll and/or the sheet) to be ritually connected to the other world, chanting sutras, *ekō*, a *dharani* of chasing away evil and the individual prayers. The hall was dense with incense smoke and sparsely lit by candles, and the many Daruma dolls and statues looking down on the whispering visitors seemed to agree on dramatizing the atmosphere of intensity. Twice a day the priest of the temple gave a dharma talk in the main hall. Otherwise, this was populated during the day by a few representatives from the Hanazonokai showing and selling paintings made by the skilled priest, the profits being donated to aid projects in the third world. Judging from the number of Daruma figures and statues around the temple, most of which are donated as gifts of gratitude from the benefits received from Bodhidharma, ceremonies like these are highly valued by visitors, temple affiliates, and believers.

Manninkō kōjūsai: *dining, healing, and circumambulating toilets*

Another Myōshinji temple being part of the Japan Daruma Association and with a well-known local festival is Yūtoku-zan Empukuji between Kyoto and Osaka. Empukuji (円福寺), founded in the eighteenth century, is known for its figure of Bodhidharma, said to be the oldest Daruma figure in Japan. The figure, considered to be one of the country's three great Daruma images and designated as national important cultural property, is exhibited biannually on the *Manninkō kōjūsai* (萬人講講中斎) festival on the 20th of April and October, also called "Festival of the Daruma Statue" (*Darumazō matsuri*).

In this highly prestigious temple complex, having "one of the three leading Rinzai *sōdō* in Japan" (Seo 1998, 17), figures such as Nakahara Nantembō (1839–1925), Sōhan Gempō (1848–1922), Yamamoto Gempō (1866–1961), and Deiryū Kutsu (1895–1954) have trained (see ibid.), as have a number of foreigners. In the early thirties, D. T. Suzuki took initiative to establish a small dormitory, a "Zen Hospice," especially aimed at foreigners wishing to experience Zen monastic practice (Suzuki 1933, 192–93). The training hall nowadays permanently houses about ten monks (that is, until they leave the *sōdō* after completed training). Although there are no regular *zazenkai*, schools, companies, and government officials come here to participate in courses (*zazen kenshū*), learning Zen discipline and monastic life to take back to the world in which they live. According to the priest, who is also the Zen master (*shike*), there are only a handful of *danka* connected to the temple. The main sponsors and religiously active lay agents are not part of Myōshinjiha institutionally—some are not even *danka* of Zen Buddhist temples. Most are members of a *kō* called the *Manninkō*, "Religious Assembly of Ten Thousands," referring both to its size and to the estimated number of visitors to the religious festivals at Empukuji. However, not all of those coming are members of the *kō*. I talked to several participants coming from far away, who were thus not within reach of the alms-begging routes of the monks of which this festival is a return activity. The monthly *takuhatsu* on which the monks collect rice, vegetables, and money is aimed at members of the *kō* and believers—*shinja*, as the present priest called them, though, as he also explained with a glint in his eye, nobody can tell to which extent and of what nature their faith goes. Twice a year these received favors and material goods are returned and repaid in gratitude (*hō-on*). The temple and its inhabitants invite the Manninkō to a *kōjūsai* (講中斎), a "feast" in which the monks serve meals for the *kō* members, a practice known

in most Rinzai Zen monasteries where, however, the serving of food usually is the only ritual practice going on.[194] The festival, which began in the Edo period and developed into its present form in the Taishō period, is thus a ritual return of favors to which the monks and the temple are indebted, and a way of keeping the relations intact, the *kōjūsai* being a renewed beginning of an exchange relation in which the lay donators will have to pay back. But it is also an opportunity to meet each other under other circumstances. Alms-begging is usually conducted impersonally and in silence. During the festival—which I visited three times: 20 October 1996, 20 April 1997, and 20 October 2000—I saw many smiles and heard a lot of social talk among all types of agents.

Buses loaded with mostly elderly women commuted regularly from the nearest stations to the temple during the festival days. The path to the temple, which is usually closed to outside visitors, was packed with stalls selling everything from dried fish, herbal medicine, toys, and Daruma dolls to scarves and underwear. A few passed by the parallel path, partly hidden by the row of stalls, tossing coins and praying in front of the many (I counted nearly forty) different Buddhist statues. Behind the entrance gate, priests and members of the Manninkō sat welcoming the visitors, painting the names of donors on tiles dedicated (*kenge*) to the temple—a common way, in the Buddhist world, to sponsor a building and to earn merit. A large Kannon figure received offerings (money and flowers) from bowing passers-by.

Within the main hall (*hondō*) people knelt down in front of the main alter, offering candles, coins, flowers, fruits, or rice cakes. Some were sitting for longer periods with their hands folded in front of their faces, with eyes closed and lips gently moving in a silent prayer. As both statues of the Sixteen Good Deities (*jūroku zenjin*, protectors of the *Heart Sutra* and of Buddhism in general) and the earlier masters of the temple were hidden behind curtains, I am sure only very few would know which—if any specific—deity they directed their prayers and offerings toward. Few also noticed the enshrined Kannon figure and the *ihai* votive tablets from deceased *danka* members next to the

[194] *Kōjū* (講中) in itself means a religious association, *sai* (斎) being the character also used for "purification" and *uposatha*, the Buddhist twice-monthly gathering of lay people at the monasteries. In Zen terminology it means "reception day for adherents." See Satō 1973, 71 and Takahashi and Nagato 1984, 103–6.

main altar, those kneeling down with their eyes closed in silent prayer probably being family members of the recently deceased.

The main attraction in the main hall is a large statue of Maya Bunin, Śākyamuni Buddha's mother in a different form (*migawari*) of Kannon.[195] By first rubbing parts of the figure's body and then one's own body, this ritual is expected to cure or prevent diseases on the parts of the body touched.[196] Most people in the *hondō* went from paying homage in front of the main altar to the Kannon statue, which at times was almost hidden by mainly elderly women. Close to the statue, priests from other Rinzai temples (mainly Myōshinjiha) sat behind small tables selling Daruma-figures, *omamori* and *fuda* to prevent diseases, especially paralysis (*chūbu*), for which one could also order a specifically fabricated prayer on which the name of the purchaser was written beside the *Heart Sutra*. Prayers of consecrating the different amulets had been given by the priest the day before.

Next to them, Manninkō representatives were selling boxed lunches (*bentō*) to be eaten later or brought home—the chopsticks were intended to be kept as they were also functioning as amulets. *Omamori*, *fuda*, and chopsticks bought last year were collected in a large box in the middle of the hall. They had served their purpose and needed to be renewed.

In the adjoining *zendō*, called the Darumadō, people lined up in rows, tossing coins in a small box in front of four monks sitting on the platform on which they usually meditate, eat, and sleep. Each of the monks lightly tapped the shoulders of the visitors with a *keisaku* (the "encouragement stick," usually used by the master during *zazen*) while chanting the mantra (*gyatei gyatei haragyatei*) from the *Heart Sutra*. A signboard explained this ritual of "striking the back" (*kata tataki*) as a means of ritually healing stiff backs (*kata no korana omajinai*). A monk explained to me it was a form of *riyaku* and healing, and another priest called it "service" for the laity. The former priest said it removed all the bad and poisonous character of a person.

Inside the *zendō* a large wooden box filled with sand in which to place incense sticks was crowded with people waving the smoke over

---

[195] Jizō and Kannon often have the roles of taking over other people's suffering, doing their job, and living through their suffering in "changed form" (*migawari*), "changing or substituting one's body."

[196] This practice is often related to the healing Buddha, Yakushi (Skr. Bhaisajya-guru. On devotion to this "Master of Healing," see Harvey 1990, 189–90). Ian Reader writes that rubbing the figure first is a way of gaining merit, while touching one's own body first means transferring pain or illness to the deity (1991a, 172).

their bodies. This purificatory ritual, which is common also in many other religious contexts in Japan, was, I was told, not directed toward any particular Buddha or agent. An altar with old memorial tablets for deceased *danka* and an altar just outside the *zendō* for wandering spirits (*segaki*) were objects of worship (offerings, *gasshō*, bows, and prayers), though none of those I spoke to knew whom the objects of respect were. "Ask the priest," said a group of smiling women when asked what appeared to be an irrelevant question. Everyone seemed to know that the figure enshrined at the back of the hall was Daruma. He is usually placed in a (not especially aesthetical) concrete building just inside the gate and only revealed to the public on specific occasions such as this festival—after having performed a *senza hōyō* (a ritual of transferring Buddha figures to another place) the day before. Daruma received respect in the form of bows, *gasshō*, lighted incense sticks, and candles, as did the "toilet deity" Ususama Myōō (Sanskr. Ucchusma, Purifier of the Defiled) enshrined outside the adjoining toilet building (*tōsu*). The monk's toilets were on this day objects of a particular ritual of which I know neither the origin nor its equivalence. Mostly elderly women and men each took from the stack one of the bamboo hats (*ajirogasa*) the monks use on alms-begging. These they wore while circumambulating the toilet buildings, chanting *on kurodāno unjaku sowaka* (Sanskr. *om krodhana hūm jah*), Ususama's mantra. The mantra and the instructions of what to do was written on a signboard on the wall, and most visitors seemed to read it. Some laughingly talked about the difficulty of remembering the mantra, asking each other if it would not be fine just to recite the (much more common, and easier to remember) mantra *namu amida butsu*, which they eventually decided to do. I was told by a representative of the Manninkō that this ritual functions to prevent diseases of the lower parts (*shimo no byō*, e.g., incontinence)[197] with the logic that the monks of the training hall are young and healthy, transferring this to the people participating in the ritual.

In a small hall next to the toilets, priests and representatives from the *kō* sold amulets, Daruma-figures, oracle lots (*omikuji*), and memo-

[197] Ritual actions to prevent *shimo no byō* are becoming more and more widespread practices in modern Japan, often related to the "Sudden Death Temples" (Davis 1992, 24–27). Often underwear is brought from home or bought at such temples, but although I did see stalls selling this, I did not see any ritual purification of it—nor did any informants know about such practice.

rial tablets (*tōba*).[198] The latter were for the benefit of the spirits (*rei*) of both deceased with relatives (*uen*) and wandering spirits without relatives (*muen*), either to be taken home and placed in the *butsudan* or on the graveyard, or placed in the building next to the Jizodō. This building is also called the Hall of Thousand Jizōs (Sentai Jizōdō), referring to the many small figures of the Jizō deity placed inside. A priest chanted sutras while holding each of the old *tōba* bought last year, returned on this day to be burned.

In addition, some representatives from the Musō Kyōkai chanted sutras and songs while ringing their bells. A microphone and loudspeakers were set up, and during a break a tape recorder transmitted the religious songs. In a building (*goten*, a "palace")[199] at the other end of the temple complex there was a dharma talk each hour. In 1996 and 1997 there were different speakers, some coming from other Rinzai sects; in 2000 it was the same speaker, a former monk at Empukuji speaking in a lively and entertaining manner about the value of life, especially for aged people. The local *fujinkai* (called Hannyakai), served tea and miso soup, people had their lunchboxes, and representatives from the *kō* sold *omamori*, *fuda*, chopsticks, and small Daruma dolls containing oracle lots. In a small tearoom tea was served by young girls dressed in kimonos. The priest, when not taking part in other activities, received guests in his living quarters. The most symbolic ritual of the festival went on in the dining hall in which monks served delicious meals for those having bought tickets. Despite this being a paid service, it was intended to be a symbolic gesture of repaying the laity for their sponsorship and commitment to the institutionalized exchange of favors.

Local folk Zen, an interpretation

The Daruma festival and the Manninkō Kōjūsai share distinctive elements but are also different expressions of local folk rituals.

Both are focused on a particular deity (Daruma, and at Hōrinji even many representations of him), though in the case of Empukuji there are a whole range of equally important other-worldly manifestations, some of whose identity were not even known or significant to the users. Both have a central theme or context to celebrate (repaying gifts and

[198] A thin wooden slat with inscriptions. *Tōba* is a phonetic transcript of the Sanskrit stupa.

[199] This "palace" was donated by prince Takamatsu no Miyake (1905–87), the third son of emperor Taishō.

setsubun), though these in actuality are only part of a larger functional framework (at Empukuji the revealing of Daruma and the ritual communion is not more important than the other rituals) or of only little importance (no specific relation to *setsubun* except for the date). At Hōrinji, agency roles were kept intact with priests and assisting priests serving the laity, assisted by representatives from the Hanazonokai in practical matters. At Empukuji one could talk of both keeping and symbolically reversing roles. The monks and priests display their status throughout the festival despite symbolic reversals (monks serving food to the laity), just like the temple complex keeps its status as such in spite of conceptual and physical transgressions (part of monastic space is opened to or taken over by the laity and nonmonastic actions). Symbolic transferal of power is, however, an even more important aspect of several of the rituals, some of which are structurally transformed into other contexts. The ritual of tapping the backs of the lay members is both a concrete action with a defined purpose of healing, but it is also a ritual of transferring the ritual power of the young and healthy monks to the elderly women. The *keisaku* used in the *sōdō* as a means of adjusting and focusing incorrect postures and mental attitude, physical and mental progress, is used here as a curing and purifying stick, "releasing" and healing the bodily part being touched, generating well-being. The circumambulation also works with the power of opposites. The vigor of the young monks is transferred to the old ladies suffering from or fearing age-determined diseases. Physical malfunction below is prevented by covering above—top and above is always in Buddhist topography being more valued than bottom and below—with symbolic objects (hat) and ritual actions (chanting the mantra of the toilet deity while circumambulating the toilet, the latter being a symbolic expression of a probably well-functioning flow of urine). Both rituals work with a logic of metaphorical association in which the metonymical relation in one context (the *zendō* and toilets as places and functions in the monastic training hall) is transferred to another (the temple as ritual place in the *kōjūsai*), assuming that the actions "work" in both contexts. This kind of magical logic is also at work for ritual transactions with other-worldly agents or powers, as when the power of protection and/or healing is directly transferred to the acting agent by touching the Kannon figure. Other objects are only perceived to have efficacy through the mediating power and expertise of the priests. This counts for both Hōrinji and Empukuji, where objects being sold are first consecrated, and later, when being returned after use, are destroyed and

have their power "released." The idea that anonymously generated power (unidentified agents, e.g., to the agents' unknown deities and ancestors, or things such as incense smoke) is equally efficacious as named or personified agents also points to the similar logic that actions performed in the prescribed way are more correct but not necessarily more efficacious than actions done as if doing it the right way (e.g., the women reciting the "wrong" mantra). This dynamic between more and less structure is, as opposed to the more formal performances at the *honzan*, typical to most local rituals and festivals, I have observed. This also counts for the individual ritual functions and ideas attributed to them. Some rituals are almost entirely dependent on individual interpretation (prayers, offerings), while others have definite structures and aims, either for oneself (e.g., the list of prayer objects at Hōrinji and the *kata tataki* in the Empukuji *zendō*) or for others (transferring merit to ancestors). That most people at Empukuji were elderly people also is a logical indication of the kinds of rituals offered, several of them focusing on bodily problems (stiff back, incontinence, paralysis, and the all-inclusive Kannon-healing). At both places there was no set order of which rituals to do when, though the logic of the natural setup of the temples did leave me with the impression that I was the only one criss-crossing from place to place.

This-worldly benefits are certainly important aspects of both festivals. Although ad hoc interpretations of what is going on are more common in local temple ceremonies than in the ones performed at the *honzan*, there are naturally ways to place such practices in the semantically right context. When I later asked the priest of Hōrinji, Sano Taiten, about the festival and the aspects of this-worldly benefits, he commented that the best practice for all Zen Buddhists naturally is *zazen*, but since some people, for instance the elderly, are perhaps not able to sit in meditation position, these kinds of alternative practices are more suitable ways for them to practice Zen. At Empukuji the priest and *shike* Katō Gikan told me that though there is no direct relationship between Zen and *riyaku*, they are not opposed to each other, since both are part of the Buddhist world. That there is a qualitative difference is obvious, since, as he told me, there is also an element of cultivation (*kyōka*) behind such practices. Visitors may become believers, they may change their general attitude of anxiety (*shinpai*) to mental piece of mind (*anjin*). That both temples are part of the Japan Daruma Association itself is an indication of them being conscious of the value of promoting "correct" Zen Buddhism.

3.6.6 *Rites of passage*

Like space, time needs conceptual boundaries to give meaning to a natural continuous flow. The transition from one status to the other needs ritual marking both to "give order and definition to the biocultural life cycle" (Bell 1997, 102) and to performatively generate such status elevations. Rites of passages are turning points in the life of the individual; they are events in a greater narrative defining and giving meaning to birth and death and everything in between. While Bourdieu calls them rites of consecration or simply rites of institution (1991, 118), they are also ways to justify the institutional power controlling and displaying such markings, being means of making the individuals "believe that their existence is justified, that their existence serve some purpose" (126).

Although all "special rituals" (特別な行事 *tokubetsu na gyōji*, which approximately correspond to the category rites of passage) are considered activities of the sect and occasions to cultivate the laity as means of transmitting the teachings of Zen (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212), they are not included in all classifications of religious practice within the Myōshinji publications. Nor do they have equal importance to all agents. As is the case in most Buddhist countries, rites of passage are almost exclusively reduced to ordination and rituals of death, though some other rituals have been either constructed or adopted especially in modern times. This chapter will first describe the precept ceremony as an institutional ritual of ordination for lay people, followed by rituals of sociocultural and biological order, where I will concentrate on rituals and the institutional context related to death and afterlife.

Lay ordination; jukai-e *and receiving the precepts*

A (Zen) Buddhist priest has the ritual power to consecrate inanimate objects. He can chant in front of a new Buddha image, a memorial tablet, or a grave stone to invoke the spirit (*tamashi ire*) in a ceremony of "opening the eye of truth" (*kaigen shiki*, or *tengen shiki*)—the opposite ceremony of desacralization (*hakken shiki*) being when an image is old and needs to be replaced. A groundbreaking ceremony (*jichin shiki*) might be held for temples and other Buddhist constructions to purify and sacralize it. Inaugurating new centers also calls for ceremonial confirmation, as when the Kyoto International Zen hall (Kyoto Kokusai Zendō) was opened in October 1996, and the promotional festivity of performing (staged meditation, interviews) for clerics, bigwigs, and

invited journalists and photographers was part of the consecration. But consecrating living beings is a more paradigmatic event. Ordaining kami and spirits has been conducted by Zen priests (Bodiford 1993, 173–79), and from the early period of introducing Zen Buddhism to the common people, mass ordination ceremonies seem to have been efficient means of spreading the teaching and gaining institutional power.[200]

The precepts (Sk. *sila*, J. 戒 *kai*) are part of the classical Buddhist Eightfold Path, often considered the ethical part of the triad with meditation and wisdom. In Mahayana and East Asian Buddhism the idea, practice, and function of the precepts underwent some changes, and in present-day Japan the precepts of Zen Buddhism consist of the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts: the Refuges, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Major Precepts.[201] The number and nature of the precepts in practice, however, are not always strictly set. When asking about it I was given different answers from different priests, and in the precept ceremony described below only the Five Precepts and the Three Pure Precepts were chanted. The precepts are said to go back to Śākyamuni Buddha and should be treated as valuable treasures, and kept and followed (*Kyōka biyō*, 5) as the "precept rules" (戒律 *kairitsu*) becoming the backbone in one's life, purifying and burning away desires (*Zen Q & A*, 103). On the other hand, they are almost impossible to keep (ibid.), and most Buddhist traditions encourage a pragmatic use with neither restrictions nor sanctions (e.g., *Hanazono Q & A*, 78). As is the case with "too much" funeral in (Zen) Buddhism, too little ethics has also been a point of criticism from mostly intellectuals and scholarly minded priests. Although the upward lift of identifying meditation with keeping the precepts (*zenkai ichinyō, Shūmon anjinshō*, 24) has become a Zen paradigm since Dōgen, keeping the precepts (持戒 *jikai*) or practicing them (戒行 *kaigyō*) is not considered to be an important aspect of being a Buddhist—which my surveys among Myōshinji agents also clearly

---

[200] The *jukai-e* probably originated within the Sōtō sect (Takenuki 1992, 152; see also Bodiford 1993), though the circumstances concerning religious confraternities (*kō*) and the nonmonastic participants in Zen ceremonies are still to be thoroughly investigated (Ikeda 1998, 13).

[201] The Three Pure Precepts goes: "I vow to refrain from all action that creates attachment. I vow to make every effort to live in enlightenment. I vow to live to benefit all beings". The Ten Major Precepts goes: "I vow not to kill, to take what is not given, to misuse sexuality, to speak falsely, to intoxicate mind or body of self or others, to slander, to praise self while putting others down, to be possessive of anything, not even the teaching, to harbor ill will, to ignore Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the enlightened nature of our own being". See *Shūmon anjinshō*, 24.

reveal.[202] As mentioned, this might be due to the lack of measurability in acquiring merit or benefits. An employee at the Kyōka Sentā, being a priest himself, expressed the dilemma in both seeing the five precepts as general and principally universal ethical values, and at the same time acknowledging them as context-bound rules, being difficult to translate and integrate to modern people in a modern culture.

One way of using the precepts, which to many seems both meaningful and instrumentally valid in contemporary life, is the ritualization of taking (or giving, *jukai* meaning both) the precepts. These are structurally similar to the Southern Buddhist *uposatha* "observance days" during which lay people come to stay in the monasteries with the monks. Such monthly stays of one day and night are means for the more devout to identify with the monks and/or the time in youth they spent in the monastery themselves, the most symbolic marker of identity being them taking not the usual five, but eight precepts. The Japanese word for *uposatha* is *fusatsu* (布薩), the ceremony *fusatsu-e* mostly referring to the monastic gathering of monks during which the precepts and one's repentance of having broken them are ritually chanted.[203] Such gatherings for lay people are very seldom in Buddhist Japan, though singular temples have regular arrangements (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 57). Ritually repenting one's sins (*sange*) is also part of pilgrimage[204] and other ceremonies, and both this and ritually taking the precepts as a one-time practice is part of the Zen Buddhist lay ordination ceremony.

Such ceremonies may take two forms. One is the ceremony of taking refuge in the triple jewels (帰依式 *kie shiki* or 帰敬式 *kikei shiki*), also

---

[202] Neither of the two ordained Buddhist-studies students claimed to think often of keeping the precepts, and only one among the ten ordained university *sesshin* participants claimed to do so. (The way the question was placed did not unambiguously exclude other respondents, and many from the *sesshin* without ordination also answered with the same "negative" result.) From this group 2.7% thought keeping the precepts (*jikai*) was most meritorious, 16.3% thought it among the three most meritorious practices, and 27% the least meritorious—temple sons giving it generally more value than persons from lay families. Among the *zazenkai* participants, none placed it among the two most meritorious practices, and 54.2% gave it no value at all. And among the Musō Kyōkai members, only 4.9% placed it among the five most meritorious practices, and 41.5% did not place it at all.

[203] These are identical to the ceremonies of "confessing one's evil acts" (*senpō*) in the monasteries and at the *honzan* (*shusei senpō* at New Year and *sanmon senpō* in July).

[204] Apart from seeing the physical exercise itself as a purifying ritual, one can also hear the Repentance Verse chanted, itself being a physically and mentally purifying practice. In a *yamabushi* pilgrimage at Ōmine-zan some years ago, I experienced the mantric formula *sange sange rokkon shōjō* ("purification of the six sense-organs") being chanted all through the night of the climbing.

called ceremony of entering the faith (入信式 *nyūshin shiki*). This is a ceremony in which one "vows to believe in and honor the teachings of the sect, to become a child of Buddha, obeying in all one's lifetime the realization of each day living as a believer of the Rinzai sect" (*Kyōka biyō*, 125). During such a ceremony, lasting half a day, the participants chant the Verse of Repentance (*Sangemon*), the Verse of Taking Refuge in the Triple Jewel (*Sankiemon*), the Four Great Vows of Bodhisattvahood, sutras, *ekō, gatha*, the Article of Faith in Life, and if possible sit in meditation (ibid. 126–28). When an informant at the headquarters answered "almost never" to my question of its usage, I took that to mean these rituals are actually not performed anymore. Rather than conducting such small ceremonies in the individual temples, the larger and more formal ceremonies of taking the precepts (授戒会 *jukai-e*) are more widespread—though not as popular as the institution would like them to be. *Jukai-e* is the abbot's main missionary visit to local temples (*Shūsei*, 363), gathering priests and *danka* from the neighboring parishes. The ceremonies may last one, two, or three days, often with identical schedules each day for different participants.[205]

Since the chosen parish in autumn 2000 (21 October) was Keihan (the Kyoto and Osaka region) the ceremony (*goshinke jukai-e*) was held in the dharma hall in the *honzan*, lasting from ten o'clock in the morning until five o'clock in the afternoon Saturday and Sunday, with identical schedules for two different parties of the same parish. Almost 1,200 people attended, approximately equal numbers of men and women (most of them being couples). Most were well beyond their fifties and wearing a *rakusu*[206] around their necks—showing them to belong to the Myōshinji sect—and I saw quite a few also sitting with their rosaries during the ceremony. A few women were also wearing a white *happi* (coat)—a ritual garment used for both pilgrimage and funerals—on which some had stamps from different pilgrimage sites.

Before the ceremony, when all gathered in the dharma hall, the meaning of the precepts and of the ceremony of taking them were explained by a priest from one of the subtemples to which the parish

[205] See an example of a schedule of a three-day course in *Kyōka biyō*, 24–28, two-day course in ibid. 105–6. Compare also with Jiyū Kennett's description of a larger and more symbolically dense ceremony of the Sōtō sect (1973). See *Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 46–55 for vocabulary, schedule, some of the texts used, prices and application forms and 65–77 for bibliography on *kaimyō* related aspects.

[206] The *rakusu* is a bag carried around the neck. As symbolically identical to the Buddhist bowl, it is used by monks, priests, and lay people having taken the precepts.

belongs. It was emphasized with a raised voice that this indeed is the most important ritual (*gishiki*) for a Buddhist (*bukkyōto*), in which all would become real disciples of the Buddha (*hontō no butsudeshi*), receiving a symbol of this in form of the *kaimyaku* (戒脈 "precepts chart")[207] on which a Buddhist name, signaling that one has taken the precepts (*kaimyō*, precept name), is written at the end of a long chart listing the names of Buddha and the Zen patriarchs.

After describing the schedule of the day, the priest gave detailed prescriptions for how to conduct the rituals in the correct manner. Each ritual was explained this way, some of them being well ahead while the last instructions were given, and the participants rehearsed the gestures a few more times. The beating of the large drum signaled the entrance (*nyūdō*) of first the abbot and later other high-ranking priests. The abbot, being both the precept master (戒師 *kaishi*) and representing the Buddha (*Goshinke jukai-e*, 20), made prostrations and took a seat on the *shumidan* altar (*tōdan*). After all having chanted the Heart Sutra and *Shōsaiju*, the leader of chanting (*inō*) recited an *ekō* praying for world peace and expressing gratitude to the sect founder. All chanted the *Hakuin zenji wasan*, after which the abbot recited passages from and held a lively lecture (*teishō*) on the *Rinzairoku*, relating it to the importance of taking the precepts. The *Raihaimon, Sangemon*, a *dharani* and the Bodhisattva Vows were chanted, before the abbot and the priests left the hall. The lunch in the abbot's quarter (*hōjō*) included both chanting and instructions in Buddhist dining manners.

The first period of the afternoon session began with a dharma talk by the *kommashi* (羯磨師),[208] a priest (from one of the subtemples, Reiunin) explaining from the dharma chair the manners of receiving the precepts, the importance of *gasshō* and *raihai* as signs of sincere respect and commitment, and the Bodhisattva Vows as signs of purification. He then guided the rehearsal of chanting the scriptures and a two-minute period of *zazen*. These were considered practices for the final entrance into satori (*kegyō raihai, Goshinke*, 2). After a short break, all were *gasshō*ing when the abbot and the other priests entered the hall,

---

[207] The *kaimyaku* is sometimes interchangeable with *kechimyaku*, though the former is usually only used for precept ceremonies.

[208] The word *komma* (Sanskr. *karman*) originally was a "proceedings, ceremony, or ritual performed by a lawfully-constituted group of monks" (*Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary*, 178), the *kommashi* being one of the leaders guiding the persons in receiving the precepts.

in which the doors had now been closed and large folding screens had been set up. The abbot secluded himself behind the screens, chanting passages from scriptures as in a ritual dialogue, with the priest guiding the laity (*injōshi*) standing outside the screens. The abbot guided the chanting of the Repentance Verse, the Three Jewels, and the Precepts, asking all to keep the latter. The participants all chant affirmatively, "We will." The lights were then switched off and candles were lit. While all chanted the *Enmei jikku kannongyō* (a *dharani* related to longevity), each participant queued up in front of first one priest wetting their foreheads and then another priest giving them a stamp on the same spot, being a mark of commitment to the Three Treasures. The *kaimyaku* was given by the abbot behind the screen to each individual vowing to keep them. One of them was a priest who later told me he was receiving it on behalf of (代戒) a *danka*, who was not able to come by himself. Having finished, the screens were removed, the lights turned on, and offerings were made to the ancestors and the wandering ghosts (*gaki*), a ritual symbolically transferring the merit of receiving the precepts. While 312 people took part in this ritual transferring of "precepts of relations" (*iinkai*), 840 took the main precepts (*honkai*) for themselves.

The abbot gave a small speech in which he stated that all had now received a basis with which to start a new life as true believers and as Buddha's children, a status with which to repay received gratitude (*hō-on kansha*) daily.[209]

This lay ordination is structurally equivalent to the *shukke* ordination ceremony in that this condensed ceremony left out some rites, which ideally also could be included (e.g., more meditation, setting birds free). The initiates undergo a spiritual transformation with purification and death symbolism (darkness, white clothes, screens)[210] to a new status, being the springboard for a new life. It is a ceremony in which one enters the Zen sect and becomes a true believer (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 86–87), inherit Buddha's heart/mind (*Kyōka biyō*, 5) and becomes Buddha's disciples or even Buddha (*Shūmon anjinshō*, 31). The *jukai-e* is "a gathering where Buddhists learn to master life and the way of living in order to spend today correctly and tomorrow brightly" (*Kyōka biyō*, 17). As a ritual event, it has short as well as long-lasting influence

---

[209] As part of repaying received gratitude, an ordination ceremony is also called "*hō-on jukai-e*" (*Kyōka biyō*, 17).

[210] Apparently the rites of the Sōtō sect ordination are symbolically more explicit (Kennett 1973, 250–55).

and effect. It purifies and sanctifies life from where to begin an active life as a Buddhist keeping the precepts and striving for achieving and realizing the values and religious goals of the sect. It ratifies both the Bodhisattva vow of achieving Buddhahood and saving all, while also being a commitment to gracefully embrace the inverted action of being saved by the Bodhisattva, the Buddha(s), and the institution.

No specific knowledge is acquired during the ceremony, no secret wisdom learned. As opposed to the initiation of the monks, there is no authority related to becoming an initiate. Apart from ritually taking and vowing to keep the precepts—which, after all, was only part of the whole ceremony—it is thus seen as an ordination and a confirmation of the Buddhist teachings and the religious institutional genealogy. By symbolically identifying with sangha and the *shukke* family it is also a commitment to the underlying institutional hierarchical order, in which the *shukke-zaike* dichotomy is consecrated. The "aftercare" of the ordination (learning how to apply the precepts into daily life, *Jūshoku oboegaki*, 87) is thus also a way with which the institution ideally can keep bonds to the laity. That taking the precepts seems more important than keeping them could suggest the ritual efficacy itself to be the main (or only) motive for participating. Although the ceremony in principle may be repeated every year, there are actions to be engaged in "once in a lifetime" (*Kyōka biyō*, 12), and thus perhaps by many considered as (merely) purifying actions with which to achieve either this-worldly benefits or merit accumulation to the ancestors. That the ceremony preferably is conducted on the *ennichi* of Kaisan or Hanazono (*Tebiki*, 88) and that many people actually use and think of the *kaimyaku* to be a magical charm might underline the general feeling of the importance of (merely) ritual efficacy. That most people seemed to take a serious interest in the rituals does not suggest that they were truly engaged in ethics or living a "Zen life." But their ritual participation also did not suggest the opposite. People taking precepts are often already more actively engaged in being *danshinto*, and the ordination might be the ritual trigger for an even more committed life, perhaps making the "'occasional Buddhism' only a little less occasional" (Welch, 1967, 361). Ritualizing ethics is not opposed to ethicizing rituals, but might even to some be one of the effects of participating. Likewise, the institution polishing its image of not only being a religion of death, but also of ethics and institutional commitment, is not opposed to the motives of the individual participants in the relationship of exchange.

Rituals of sociocultural and biological order

One rite of passage that is promoted as Buddhist is the wedding ceremony *butsuzen kekkon shiki* (仏前結婚式, "wedding ceremony in front of Buddha").[211] The couple makes a vow to the ancestors, prays to Buddha, makes offerings, and drinks sake in nine sips (symbolizing triple refuge), while the priest binds them together by sprinkling them with purifying water, giving them a wedding ring and a Buddhist rosary and announcing them to be husband and wife. The Buddhist wedding (as well as silver and golden wedding) is a modern construction copied from both Shinto and Christian traditions. Other rituals with no Buddhist connection are sometimes included in the calendars of temple ceremonies, such as imitating the Shinto ritual in taking infants to the temple (*miyamairi*) to receive blessings from the Buddhist pantheon and to the family grave to report the birth to the ancestors; the 7–5–3 festival (*shichigosan matsuri*, where young girls aged 3 and 7 and boys aged 5 are usually taken to a Shinto temple to be blessed by kami); the Coming of Age Ceremony (*seijinshiki* at age 20); ceremonies of entrance into and graduating from school (*nyūgaku, sotsugyō*); Boy's Day (*kodomo no hi*, "children's festival") and Girl's Day (*hinamatsuri*, doll's festival). Such life-affirming rites of passage, some of which are also celebrated as communal calendrical rituals to most Japanese, however, are thought of being inherently Shinto in nature and in actuality are performed mostly for the (few) priest families. In 1999 only twenty Buddhist marriages were reported to have been conducted in all the Myōshinji temples.

It might be that "in societies where the transition to adulthood is a gradual or obscure process... rites tend to be simple or absent" (Norbeck 1970, 108). The social distinctiveness of Japanese age levels certainly have been relativized in modern times, but although it might be true that some rites of passage (e.g., the ordination ritual) have lost some of their previous performative power, it is also the case that some rituals are becoming more popular—as is the case with increasingly glamorous church or chapel wedding ceremonies. The main reason for the lack of success in incorporating other kinds of rites of passage is, I believe, not historical but structural. Japanese religion has often been characterized as peculiar due to its division of labor. "Unity in diversity" is not

---

[211] See *Zau*, 104–5, *Jūshoku oboegaki* 87, *Hōyō no tebiki*, 71–90.

only a rhetorical slogan for idealizing a harmonious religious society; it is also the condition under which individual religions and sects have to adjust and compete. The doubtful honor of having the image of being a religion of death, afterlife, and metaphysics is both necessary and to some extent natural and logical but also the reason why some Buddhists see the need to reshape their part in the religious network. A main motive for promoting the wedding ceremony (as for instance with advertisements in the small magazine *Hanazono*) is perhaps not primarily to actually increase the number of Buddhist marriages but to strategically give a brighter image (*Zau*, 105) to Buddhism and the Myōshinji sect as "living Buddhism" with "bright temples" (*Butzuzen kekkonshi*, 61) in adopting the Shinto emphasis on "beginnings, growth, fertility, and celebration" (Reader 1991, 60). By buddhizing other rites of passage and by (at least in theory) totalizing and naturalizing the life cycles of each individual narrative, the sect also gains merit in presenting itself as a more coherent, organic, and "positive" institution.

Rituals of death and dying

Eighty-two-point-one percent of Myōshinji *danka* find funerals and memorial services, and 49.1% find visiting their family grave to be the main reason for coming to a Buddhist temple (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 8, 2002: 3). Most priests and representatives from the headquarters probably find this to be a problem.

Death has always been a paradox in Buddhism. Buddhist thoughts and explanations of death and afterlife have served as missing links explaining theodicy and cosmology. Ritualizing death as a means of conquering or giving meaning to it has throughout Buddhist Asia also been a significant means of spreading the dharma and acculturating to local societies. In Japan, Zen Buddhist funerals began in the fourteenth century. Inverting pre-Buddhist emphasis on death as a dangerous and polluting thing to avoid, (Zen) Buddhism "emphasized the positive function of the funeral for the spiritual benefit of the deceased" (Bodiford 1992, 163), and the dissemination of the Zen sects "advanced hand-in-hand with the popularization of Zen funeral services" (ibid. 1993, 185). Heated debate during the early Meiji years resulted first in a prohibition of cremation as a barbaric act and later in such general acceptance that today the cremation rate is virtually one hundred percent (Bernstein 2006, 67), the majority of which is taken care of by Buddhist institutions.

But death and rituals related to death have also been a problem within living Buddhism. As mentioned, what has pejoratively been termed "funeral Buddhism" (*sōshiki bukkyō*) has not only been meant as a neutral description of the successful ritualization and institutionalization of death and afterlife. Funeral Buddhism is a term most priests will recognize as an actual fact and a problem also expressed and debated in Buddhist journals and research reports from Myōshinji.[212] It is a term suggesting that Buddhism is nothing more than an institution taking care of and gaining profit from funerals, and it is a term signaling what all people—including the Buddhist priests—know: that without it they would not survive. Although 66% of the Myōshinji priests have less than ten yearly funeral services (*Jūshoku no chōsa*, 62), these combined with their following memorial services are essential for the economic background of temple life. "The art of Buddhist funerals in Japan is very Zen" (Bodiford 1992, 146).

Funeral rituals

While funerals are still held in the home of the deceased and/or in the temple, having a funeral company (葬儀社 *sōgisha*) take care of everything has become a modern alternative to more and more people.[213] Although having no relations to either the deceased, 97-year-old Ōno Tomeko, or her family, I was permitted to observe a funeral ceremony in September 2004, attended by a Myōshinji priest, at Gyokusen-in, a Kyoto-based company with six departments in the city. The name Gyokusen-in itself suggests a temple and Buddhist relation, being the precept name "*kaimyō*," see below) of the owner, who started the company in 1990. The building contains three floors, each with three ceremony halls and adjoining rooms for the families staying overnight for the funeral wake. The company serves all persons regardless of

[212] "*Sōshiki bukkyō*" was originally coined by Tamamuro Taijō in 1963 and has since then become a standard concept used by many researchers and Buddhists themselves. On funerals in Japan, see Kenney (1996–97), Kenney and Gilday (2000), Suzuki (2000), Rowe (2000), Williams (2005), and Bernstein 2006.

[213] In 1992, 56.7% were held in the home, 28.7% in a temple or church, 10.5% in a funeral hall, 3.7% in a community hall, and 0.4% somewhere else (Kenney 1996–97, 410n 6). Rowe refers to a survey from 1977, where 84% of the funerals were held at homes and only 4% at funeral halls; the figures in 1999 were, respectively, 19% and 60%. Lack of space and difficulty in rearranging the furniture were the two most common reasons for not having the funeral at home (Rowe 2000, 356n7).

religious affiliation, though Buddhist funerals make up the majority. There are no statistics on the institutional relations, but an employee figured the number of funerals with attending Myōshinji priests to be around seventy to eighty per year.

Shibuya Kōhō from the Myōshinji subtemple Zakke-in was called by the company to come and serve as the conductor of the religious rituals for both the wake and the funeral. The deceased was not one of his temple's 700 *danka*, but as her husband had a Zen Buddhist funeral, the family asked for a similar service. Shibuya later told me that it was custom that one of the priests from the *honzan* was called when requested by the family of the deceased, perhaps due to the fact that it is close to the funeral building. He estimated that he has about five ceremonies at the funeral hall every year, compared to forty "normal" ones in the temple.

The first religious ritual after death has occurred is called "the last water" (*matsugo no mizu*). A close relative takes a chopstick with cotton tied to the end, dips it into water, and quietly touches the lips of the deceased, a rite having its legendary origin in Śākyamuni's asking for water before his final nirvana. The ritual offering of water is both an offering in order to express hope of revival[214] and a ritually manifested proof of death, a "guarantee that he is truly dead" (Kenney 1996–97, 401). It is the beginning of the journey toward ancestorhood, a condition where the dead "revert[s] to a condition of babyhood" (ibid.) in which he needs to be fed by his children. Washing the corpse (*yukan*) is both considered to be a polluting action—which is why it is often done at the hospital, using gauze and alcohol—and a purifying ritual of the deceased. Already at the moment of death he has been ascribed the status of *hotoke* 仏, the Japanese word for Buddha and a euphemism of the dead, with the verbs of dying being *hotoke ni naru* (成仏になる, "become Buddha") or *jōbutsu suru* (成仏する, "attain Buddhahood"), and in a pamphlet from Myōshinji the subtitle of a small description of the *yukan* ritual is "tidying Lord Buddha" (*hotokesama no midashinami*, *Osōshiki*, 4). The deceased is made up (*shi keshō*, "death makeup"); if a man he must be shaven, if a woman she will have light makeup (ibid.). He/she will be dressed in a white kimono or white *happi* and

[214] Suzuki 2000, 40–41 only focuses on this aspect, calling it a "rite of attempted resuscitation" (*soshō* or *sosei*), which was further emphasized earlier when family members would cry out the deceased's name at the last moment of life.

pants, *tabi* socks, straw sandals, and perhaps with accessories such as a purse with coins, food, a bag with nail trimmings and hair cuttings, a rosary; and on top of the white bedding a small knife or sword (in one publication explained to function as an amulet, *Shingyō kyōten*, 171) and/or a walking stick is placed. He/she is thus dressed in a pilgrim's outfit, the journey of death being the final religious pilgrimage, and pilgrimage itself being a principally recurrent symbolic journey toward death.[215] The body of the deceased is to be placed beside a folded screen erected upside down (to protect against malevolent spirits, *Josei no bukkyō*, 88), with the head pointing toward the north (*kitamakura*)—a ritual based on the legend of Buddha. The hands must be folded in *gasshō* position, and the head covered by a white piece of cloth, just like the *kamidana* should be concealed with a white paper (*kamidana fuji*) when announcing the death to the ancestors in the *butsudan*.[216] The "pillow decoration" (*makura kazari*) is a small table covered by a white cloth, with offerings consisting of flowers, incense, a lighted candle, a bowl of cooked rice, and water.[217]

The funeral company had already taken care of all the arrangements of tidying up the body before the family gathered at six o'clock the evening before to take part in the funeral wake (通夜 *tsuya*). A wake is held for the closest family to watch over the deceased (who has now been placed in the coffin) in silence, to memorize and pay respect to him/her, and to keep away evil spirits (*akuryō*). The priest had not had any contact with the family before this evening. His service at the night watch is, however, important in the ritual procedures of dying. He chants the *Makuragyō* (枕経 "Pillow Sutra"), which is actually different parts of sutras, *ekō* and *gatha* and also the common name for the whole service during which the priest sits next to the deceased whom he may have known or never seen before.[218] At a common funeral wake in the home

---

[215] This is also suggested by the fact that pilgrimage seals may be stamped on the clothes (Kenney 1996–97, 403 n14). In the Tendai tradition at Mt. Hiei, the 1,000-day pilgrimage does actually contain the risk of physical death, and the knife carried was formerly supposed to be used for suicide if the monk(s) could not complete the journey (Stevens 1988).

[216] Since Buddhism as such has no taboos about death and purity, the *butsudan* need not be covered (*Josei no bukkyō*, 89).

[217] As the light of the incense and the candle is said to be the ray of the dharma guiding the way toward Buddhahood, it should not be extinguished (*osōshiki* pamphlet, 5). In a usually tabooed manner, chopsticks are stuck straight up into the rice.

[218] The latter is often the case if the deceased has moved to another city in which he/she has never had any contact with the priest or temple. In a survey from the Pure

of the deceased, the priest Shibuya later told me, he would normally also give a dharma talk, expressing both Buddhist teachings and the personality of the deceased,[219] and perhaps stay for the "devotional meal" (*shōjin ryōri*) which may be accompanied with sake and beer throughout the night. As he had no relationship to the family, he did not think it appropriate to take part in such personal activities.

At nine o'clock the next day, twenty persons, dressed in black, and a few children gathered at the second floor in front of the altar (祭壇 *saidan*). This had been neatly decorated with fresh fruits and flowers, candles, electric lamps and a lit-up photo of the deceased and a tablet with her *kaimyō*. All employees were wearing uniforms and white gloves. During the whole ceremony there were at least two of them present, at times up to five. When walking past the area in front of the altar, all of them made a deep bow, as did the photographer, who shuttled between the floors. When the priest entered in his ceremonial orange robe and hat (*mōsu*), all family members and employees made a deep bow before he sat down in front of the coffin to start chanting. The texts chanted are both instrumental in helping the deceased to "the other side" and symbolically expressing (Zen) Buddhist ideals. The first part includes the ritual granting of the precepts, in which the Verse of Repentance, the Three Refuges, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Five Precepts are chanted on behalf of the deceased, suggesting that "the dead make ideal Zen monks" (Bodiford 1993, 196).[220] This is further symbolized by shaving, washing the body, and the Buddhist tonsure ("a vow to cut off passions and the arrogance of the mind and a proof that one has become Buddha's disciple," *Osōshiki* pamphlet, 9), though

Land sect, almost all priests are said to have performed funerals for people other than their parishioners (Kenney and Gilday 2000, 176). The name and rank of the priest as well as the temple and sect he belongs to are often announced at the beginning of the funeral.

[219] In a survey from the Kyōka Sentā, 20% of the respondents claimed always to give a dharma talk at funerals, and 35% did so sometimes (*Hakusho*, 28). It is not mentioned whether this was during the wake or the funeral (*sōshiki*).

[220] Bodiford's comment was made to the related practice of former times when Sōtō monks gave kōans to the deceased on secret initiation documents (*kirikami*), the silence being interpreted as the ultimate affirmative response (195). Zen ordination might be seen as an expression of the ideal of conducting *zaike* funerals in a spirit of Zen Buddhism, leaving out elements from shamanism and folk belief (*Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212). Since Jōdō Shinshū does not regard the funeral as an ordination ritual, dharma names (*hōmyō*) are given instead of precept names.

in reality—and in this funeral—the latter is often managed by reciting a Verse of Tonsure (*teihatsu ge*) and cutting a little bit of hair.

Unless belonging to the minority who has received or determined the nature of a precept name, *kaimyō* (戒名), while still being alive, the deceased will be bestowed one by the priest at death to further emphasize the symbolism of ordination. A *kaimyō* consists of a Buddhist name (諱 *imina*, two characters) and a more honorific name (道号 *dōgō*, two characters)—the latter only given at a certain rank in the clerical system. The title or rank name (位階 *ikai* or 位号 *igō*, two or three characters, only given posthumously) is actually a separate name, but often included as part of the concept *kaimyō*. Ideally being an honorific emblem given to outstanding individuals due to their meritorious religious practice or work for the temple—giving the *kaimyō* being a Buddhist gift (*fuse, Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 19–20)—the *kaimyō* today is given to (and paid for by) most adherents, regardless of their religious merits.[221] Most Myōshinji priests talk to the family of the deceased, consult the lay representative (*sōdai*), or decide status name (*ikai*) according to the amount of donations to the temple or according to the names used by previous generations, the social status and the religious practice of the deceased being less important (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 10). The nature of the *kaimyō* (*imina* and *dōgō*) is mostly decided according to the virtue (*toku*) of the person, or based on the characters of his lay name (ibid. 11). As the name will appear on the grave, the memorial tablet, and the death register, it functions as more than a passport to the other world. Although few can actually read the names, and only few know about the meaning and actual use of *kaimyō*, to many people it is of great importance to have a proper and prestigious *kaimyō* expressed by the rank name in particular, the status (and price) rising significantly from the lowest through the middle and most common (e.g., 居士 *koji* and 信士 *shinji* for men, and 大姉 *daishi* and 信女 *shinnyo* for women) to the most prestigious (*ingō* 院号).[222] Shibuya had given the deceased a *kaimyō* with the title of *shinnyo*, since her husband had a *shinji* title.

---

[221] What also was characteristic for Tokugawa-era Buddhism still holds true: "Death was not the great equalizer in the eyes of Buddhists in the Tokugawa period. Instead, monetary contributions, in effect, determined the social hierarchy of the world and also determined one's fate in the next" (Williams 2005, 29).

[222] As 禅定門 has been associated with being a discriminatory name used to identify *buraku*, this is only given to 2.2% of the deceased, whereas *koji/daishi*, *shinji/shinnyo*, and *ingo* are used in respectively 16%, 15%, and 15.1% of the cases in bestowing rank name within the Myōshinji sect (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 4).

In front of the coffin the priest continued chanting *eko* and *dharani.* One of these was the *dharani* of rebirth in the Pure Land, in which the sound of the priest clashing together cymbals clearly gave the audience a start. Another source of irregular sound disrupting the monotonous ritual chanting was his loud shout of "*katsu*"! This "Zen shout," which is also used as a means of shocking the monks in their meditation practice to cut off analytical thought. It is part of the chanting of dharma verses (引導法語 *indō hōgo*, "to pull/lead somebody") to the deceased, a ritual unique to Zen Buddhism, expressing the cutting off of relations to this world and guiding the deceased to the world of satori and nirvana (*Osōshiki*, 10, *Danshinto dokuhon*, 162).

While chanting Kannongyō, Daihishū, and Sharaimon ("worship of Buddha's relics"), incense was offered by each of the family members in a tray carried by one of the employees. A person apparently having some kind of relation to the deceased entered, offered incense, bowed, put his name card on the table, and left again. Having finished chanting, the priest also left momentarily for an adjoining room while all present bowed before him. After a short intermezzo, with the easy-listening music turned on again and an employee having thanked everyone on behalf of the deceased, a trolley with bunches of flowers was rolled in, while the coffin was put on another trolley to be placed in the main hall. Everybody was then given a bouquet of the flowers, which they placed in the coffin, which had its lid removed. Some were crying while saying their last farewell; others were talking to the deceased. Small children were carried so they could see their great-grandmother, and even a baby was lifted to touch her. Fresh fruits and different kinds of candy were placed in the coffin, as were photos of the deceased. The priest entered again and placed a bouquet in the coffin. The lid was put on again, and three family members each took a microphone and thanked the others for coming. Carrying a memorial tablet (*ihai*) and a large photo of the deceased, they followed the coffin into the elevator, bringing them to the entrance where the hearse was waiting. An employee stopped traffic to let the hearse and other cars drive out from the company building, while all employees respectfully made deep bows. With the "departure of the coffin" (出棺 *shukkan*) the procession of cars drove to the crematory, signaling the end of the company part of the funeral. The priest left in another taxi. His work had been done. At the crematory, another priest from another sect would be waiting to chant the final sutras, *gatha* and *eko*. There the family would also have the last farewell ceremony (告別式 *kokubetsu shiki*), offering incense and

getting a last view of the deceased. The priest would probably light a torch to symbolically light the cremation fire (下火 *ako*), certifying the deceased to have become a Buddha. The family would pick up the bones (骨揚げ *kotsuage*) after the cremation to bring them home. This is an important ritual, and the Adam's apple (喉仏 *nodobotoke*) in particular has symbolic value as a "throat Buddha," due to the triangular shape looking like a meditating Buddha.

Shibuya would again visit the home of the deceased to chant sutras while the urn with the bones is installed (*anbai* or *ankotsu*) with an ancestral tablet (*ihai*) and a photograph beneath the *butsudan* on a temporary "intermediate altar" (*chūindan*). This refers to the Buddhist idea of a 49 day long transitory period before rebirth, or as usually in Japan, before the final journey to the other world of ancestorhood. Within this forty-nine-day period, mourning (*mochū*) and taboos[223] are supposed to be kept, and services of praying for the bliss of the departed (追善供養 *tsuizen kuyō*) are ideally conducted every seventh day, continuing with rituals during *obon* and *higan*, occasional visits to the grave, and periodic memorial services (*nenki hōyō*), ideally held on the 100th day after death—and on the first, 3rd, 7th, 13th, 23rd, 33rd, 50th, or even 100th anniversary, but in practice only until the memories of the deceased have waned. At this last memorial service (*tomurai age*), the ancestor has changed from a deceased to a remote ancestor, a change in which the dead has lost his individuality, his bonds to the descendants and the living world, and much of his potential malevolent powers of being a "Buddha without relations" (*muenbotoke*). The permanent memorial tablets that were made after the forty-nine-day period—one for the *butsudan*, another for the grave—signify the changes. The one at the grave is "exposed to the elements on purpose and is left there until it disintegrates" (Ooms 1976, 66), and the one in the *butsudan* should be "returned" to the temple to be placed in a hall (*ihaidō*).

Talking to the priest Shibuya some days after the funeral, he explained to me some of the details of funeral practice. He emphasized that it was not only a religious but also a social ceremony (*shakaiteki na gishiki*) with deep symbolic content giving meaning to the deceased, the bereaved family, and society in general.

[223] E.g., not to visit Shinto shrines, to wash hands with water and scrub one's body with salt after a funeral. It was also customary during the period of mourning to place a message on the house gate saying "in mourning" (Suzuki 2000, 42).

Structure and meaning of the traditional Zen Buddhist funeral

All funerals have a more or less marked structure expressing and generating the process from one state of being to another. Zen funerals in many ways are not distinctly different from most other Japanese Buddhist funerals, though the symbolic values from monastic life are more pronounced and promoted to keep the rituals within the category of true and pure Zen.

In one sense, dying itself automatically qualifies as a ritual password in symbolically becoming a Buddha (*hotoke*). This itself, however, is not considered to be the final goal. Just like the monks are only temporarily in the monasteries until they become full-fledged members of the patriarchal temple kinship, to most Japanese (Zen) Buddhists, dying as Buddha is only transitory until the permanent status of becoming an ancestor, or a permanent member of the Buddhist paradise, the Pure Land. And just like being born does not automatically give entry into social life, dying properly and reaching the state of a thoroughbred reborn ancestor is a process in which ritual actions are needed, such as ordaining and ritually remembering the deceased. The final stage in the biological process needs a religious certification. The ritual process(es) instrumentally achieving this structurally corresponds to what Arnold van Gennep called rites of separation, transition, and aggregation (1960). These sequences are related synchronously as well as diachronically in the actual ritual process(es), some of which can be placed in more than one phase. Rituals of separation (or "breaking the bonds," *zetsuen*) thus can comprise both the last water (*matsugo no mizu*), the purification (*yukan*), the wake (*tsuya*), the devotional dining (*shōjin ryōri*), the farewell ceremony (*kokubetsu shiki*), the cremation, and finally the last memorial service. The 49 days as the intermediate period itself is a long transition phase, just as individual rituals (inverted actions,[224] the wake, the procession, the cremation) and codes of behavior (mourning, taboos, purification) are typical phenomena of the liminal phase in ritual processes. The rituals of aggregation comprise primarily the ordination rites (tonsure, being granted a posthumous name, and the precepts), the dress for the final pilgrimage, the performative utterances of the priest (*Makuragyō, indō hōgo*), the physical installation of a new identity in the home and on the grave (picking up the bones, installing the urn,

[224] *Sakasagoto*, the practice of inverting manners of a daily life during the death process.

ihai, photo, and *tōba*)—but also the last water, the washing of the body, communal dining, and the last memorial service can be seen as rites in an overall process of incorporation into a new identity and status.

The journey is materialized in a physical journey from home (or hospital/funeral hall) to the crematory from which he/she in another form returns home, finally to end up in the temple where he/she is enshrined (and eventually forgotten and/or burned). This journey is believed to correspond to the (metaphysical) journey of the soul moving from this world to the other, a journey made explicit through the change or conferring of identity markers (names, clothes, posture, objects), individual funeral rituals, and memorial services.

It has been suggested that this death process is parallel to the socialization process of the living individual, marked by ritual occurrences throughout the processes somehow being analogously reflected in both cycles (Ooms 1976, 71–73, LaFleur 1992, 34–37). Birth is thus equivalent to the "birth" at death of the new existence (e.g., becoming Buddha's child—though the forty-nine days of "pregnancy" comes after the "birth"—and being fed like children), just like entrance of the soul into the world of the ancestors (33rd anniversary) is symbolically equivalent to the transition of the individual into the community and the family (*ie*) at marriage, the successful completion of the latter guaranteeing proper relations (*en*) as categorized members without ending in states as living or dead (*muenbotoke*) transitory and endless wanderers. (The *mizuko*, aborted fetus or stillborn infant, has not become part of this world and will return without precept name and usually also without death anniversaries.)

The death process also structurally reflects the religious transition from the liminal monastic sphere (counted in years of presence) to the permanent position of master or priest. The monks ideally experience a Bataillian "little death" and a Hakuinian "great death" of *zazen* and monastic life, experiences ideally being transformed into postmonastic life as permanent insight, and certified ritually upon physical death. The death process of the laity incorporates these compressed symbols. The lay deceased becomes a symbolic monk before having acquiring the merit and "sudden experience" of becoming a Buddha.

Ideas and ideals of death

"Dying is also a way to learn about life, and an occasion to wonder whether one is really living a true and happy life," Ikegami from the Kyōka Sentā said, responding to my questioning the pragmatics and

ideology of hermeneutics in managing death and dying from an institutional perspective. Indeed, Myōshinji publications, meetings, assemblies, and overall strategies of religious matters do reflect the necessity of taking care of one of the most important religious matters in Japan.

Naturally, ritual practices and concepts related to soul and ancestorhood do contain paradoxes and doctrinal problems. Apart from the few (mostly intellectual "postmodern Buddhists") who will negate any such folk practices, the strategy of the institution and most priests seems to be a pragmatic "open hermeneutic" stand. It is either, as some priests have expressed to me, as an attitude of "give the people what they want" as a bearable solution parallel to a conviction of "true Zen," acknowledging that funerals and memorial services, after all, are the main income for most priests—or, as seems to be the general hermeneutical strategy of most of the publications, as a buddhized discourse, prescribing and describing rituals and ideas of death and the afterlife as truly belonging to the Buddhist world acted out by the institution. Buddhist legends accompany descriptions of the individual rituals and symbols, a reference to their "original meaning" often having a normative authority. Metaphorical identification is constructed between (Zen) Buddhist and non (Zen) Buddhist elements, e.g., satori and nirvana is identified with the Pure Land,[225] ancestral soul with *skandha*, the dead with Buddha and an ordained monk, etc.

Death is also an occasion at which to direct attention to the bereaved and the living. In both dharma talks during the rituals, as well as in publications from the institution, Buddhist doctrines are reinterpreted in modern terminology, and death is spiritualized and existentialized as a means of living an authentic life.[226] For the priests it is a good occasion to preach about relief of the mind, of sincerity and good faith, and the memorial services are contexts in which to teach about the value of Buddhism in daily life, on human relations, on gratitude (*Zen Q & A*, 165, *Jūshokugaku kōza*, 212, *Josei no bukkyō* 1, 20). The living praying for their dead not only pile up good merit and salvation for the ancestors (*Josei no bukkyō* 4, 106); these are also actions and attitudes that will

---

[225] According to most scriptural (Zen) Buddhist doctrines, the Pure Land is either a metaphor or an intermediate stage on the process of enlightenment. Just as the intermediary being (*chūin*) has also developed into becoming a permanent existence, the Pure Land to most Japanese has become a permanent place.

[226] E.g., being reborn as true Buddhist masters, as means of experiencing and acknowledging life and living in the moment, seeing death training also as a life training (*Gendai jiin yōkun*, 165–66; see also ibid. 158–76).

rebound to the living as comfort (*Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu*, 84, 85). Funerals should be thought of as moments in life during which to reflect on life and death, on the value of life and living (*Zen Q & A*, 157), and "in order to live a true life it is necessary for us to wake up to the value of our own life and to learn to live such life. The funeral is such a place to learn it in practice" (e.g., *Hanazono Q & A*, 147, *Zen Q & A*, 157 and *Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu*, 87). Thus the ritual process is also seen to be marked by ritual *events* at which to give meaning to the meaningless and to life and death in general.

It takes a specialist to explain the paradoxical equalizations between being a living Buddha (having Buddha nature), training to become a Buddha, and ritually becoming a Buddha by dying. Most people are not concerned with such tricky questions, nor with the (in)consistency in ideas related to death and afterlife in general. And how could and should they, when many Buddhist priests hesitate to actually believe in the consistency of mortuary rites with Buddhist teachings?[227] Often Buddha, Buddhahood, nirvana, satori, no-self, ancestorhood, and death seem to be related in a metaphorical chain of associations as part of a vaguely conceptualized domain of the other world. All have the attributes of being opposites of the known, the conceptualizable, the daily and normal; all are ideas that are parts of specialist discourses, which might be divided in straight, metonymically related arguments but which seem often to function as parts of a condensed mass of otherworldliness. In following the prescribed customs, rituals related to death and afterlife are both instrumental and meaningful acts. As "rituals of ritualization" (Tanabe 1999, 10) they secure rebirth without transmigration for the body and soul of the dead. As such they keep the extended kinship permanently alive. But they also guarantee "ontological thinning" (LaFleur 1992, 33) and finality in the process of waning memorization, in which it is not only desirable but also necessary to forget the dead (ibid.). They must be fed and remembered, both to keep within relation (*en*) and to stay away as truly otherworldly dead, a status in which they will eventually be forgotten and disappear. Ritualizing death is thus both transcending categories as well as keeping boundaries distinct.

[227] A survey from the Sōtō sect thus revealed that only a third of the asked priests actually believed in this consistency (Rowe 2004, 366). See also Covell 2005, 174–76.

Although performed with some conviction, the "belief during the rites is very low" (Ooms 1976, 80). When asked, people may hesitate in positively affirming belief in otherworldly beings or the actual efficacy of ritual actions in, for instance, turning a *muenbotoke* into an *uenbotoke*. But "it does not matter too much what the immediate meaning or effect of the actions is [...] the main thing is the act itself" (ibid. 79). Sending away the dead and memorizing them at rituals to many people simply feels good; sorrow is ritually treated and acted out, gratitude is correctly (re)paid to the dead.[228] Of course, the kinds and depths of motives, feelings, and meanings depend on the deceased, the bereaved, their relations, and the context—the death of a young child naturally will be "deeper" than the death of an old person. But funerals and memorial services to many people are simply proper things to do. Ritual participation is necessary ritual labor, and funeral ritualization keeps religion alive, being "structured by a logic of social exchange between the living and the dead and among the living themselves" (Bernstein 2006, 133).

Modernization, institutionalization, and ritual context

Zen and funerals are not static. Ideas, practices, and institutional aspects change in their interrelationships with time and context. Modernization and institutionalization have brought changes in several aspects. More people die in hospitals where the dead body is taken care of in the "room in which the soul is put at peace" (*reianshitsu*). Funeral companies (*sōgisha*) arrange practical matters and make funerals more smooth. They contact the funeral hall and crematorium, arrange flowers and food, supply the house with the necessary ritual accessories, etc.[229] They make the same threat to traditional Buddhist institutions as wedding companies do to Christian churches: offering and serving an all-in-one package to the users, often more cheaply and much more smoothly. Religious ideas and practices change. As is the case in the West, many young people have never encountered death—the concept, ritual acts, and codes of behavior (including taboos) of which become even more abstract or unknown (e.g., Kenney 1996–97, 402). The individual as

[228] As one widow of a former Zen priest told me, since there was no priest in the temple she did not perform any traditional ceremonies with sutra chanting, but instead performed an "emotional memorial service" (*kimochi kuyō*).

[229] Rowe refers to a survey saying that 90% of all calls after a death went to a funeral company, while only 1% went to a temple, shrine, or church (2000, 356).

an agent and idea has changed and, as Bloch (1988) has argued, differences in the conceptions of person is related to and reflected in the conceptualization of death: When the person is understood to be a unique individual, death is imagined to be a momentary event, whereas a person understood to be a manifestation of a socially constituted network of interdependent relations correlates to conceptualizing death as a process. Modern Japanese (Zen) funerals have changed, and to some extent the ritual processes have been condensed. Not all elements in the above described rituals are acted out in every funeral. Not all sit all night during the wake, not always is there a procession, and the ceremony of the seventh day may be held on the same day as the cremation, etc. New equipment has eliminated many manual tasks in, for instance, the cremation hall—where new rituals such as pressing the ignition button that begins incineration have emerged (Suzuki 2000, 159). Funerals compressed and abridged into a single day have tended to change the process into an event after which one can return to work immediately after removing or smoothing out old taboos of impurity. As the funeral halls are often large, several funerals in several halls may be conducted at the same time, making the event faster and more impersonal. In particular, company funerals (*shasō*), where the company pays for and arranges the whole funeral, are said to be very impersonal and primarily a matter of promoting the company (ibid. 103–6)—which is why the deceased's family often conducts a separate, more personal, funeral (ibid.). In short, "the shift from community funeral rituals to commercial ceremonies is manifested in the commoditization, commercialization, mass consumption, and professionalization of funerals" (ibid. 5). Commercialized funerals also go hand in hand with postmodern individuality, both of which not only reflect but create ritual practices. Individuals can chose to prolong life (and the death process) in hospice, a service still in the making within Myōshinji as a cultivating practice.

Although there has been a shift of focus from community rituals to individual (or family oriented) rituals, the wishes of the individual on the one side and the family and the social conventions on the other side might, however, generate conflict and dilemmas, in which the deceased, no matter how powerful he might have been while alive, often has to realize his weak power situation: funerals and death are still considered to most people a social convention demanding social considerations. In recent years a new phenomenon has spread in Japan, where individuals are offered the freedom to chose their own individual funeral, gravesite,

and degree of ceremony—a "dream grave for the twenty-first century," as stated by the priest in the Myōshinji temple Jingūji in Matsumoto (www.jinguuji.or.jp/mugen/mugen.htm), open to all regardless of religious affiliation. He has personally been engaged in responding actively to modern trends and demands by not only presenting his "clients" with opportunities for choosing and defining their own funerals but also inviting and challenging them to consider and care about matters related to death. By holding "funeral fairs" and workshops on death and ceremonial procedures, he hopes to give people a closer and more natural relationship to death and thereby give meaning to life; "dying is living" (死に方は生き方 ibid., 11).

Another response to ritualizing death in a postmodern setting is choosing a nonreligious funeral (無宗教葬 *mushūkyōsō*). This, where the professional assistance of priests and temples for either economical or ideological reasons are not needed, is another new phenomenon that has become a threat to the religious institutions. The younger generations might not automatically follow the practices of their parents, and the individual no longer needs always to feel pressed in eternal social obligations extending beyond death, as the possibility of consciously dying without keeping troublesome relations in some areas has been legitimated. The postmodern individualized Self can chose to die in peaceful solitude as a member of the Relationship of the Unrelated (*Muen no En*) in which both relations (and restrictions) and the process of dying are cut.

Death must be humanized through social and ritual processes. In recent years this includes not only those social classes or ethnic groups formerly having been dehumanized (e.g., *buraku*) or the tendency of inverting overinstitutionalized, hidden, and dehumanized death into rehumanizing it (e.g., hospice), but also new categories of entities. Memorial services for dead infants and aborted fetuses (水子 *mizoku*, "water child") for some years have had a "boom" in Japan, also within Myōshinji, where 33.2% of the responding priests in a survey claimed to conduct such ceremonies (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 1, 57). While the economical speculation in making an industry out of the sorrow and need of repentance has been criticized both within and outside the Buddhist world in Japan,[230] Buddhist institutions and individual priests have also

[230] See discussions in *Kenkyū hōkoku* 1. LaFleur 1993 and Hardacre 1997 analyze the phenomenon in a broader Japanese Buddhist context.

ethical reasons for offering such services. A rather unusual example of the latter is Okada Seihō (see 180), whose wife had three miscarriages before having their children. Since they are both very aware of the "hollow feeling," as they put it, they want to help other people with the same experiences. The temple has a graveyard offering free graves and memorial services (*muryō haka/mizuko kuyō*) for the two hundred *danka* and everyone else wanting to accept this unique offer. In return for the approximately fifty free services conducted annually, he requests a fee, which he himself donates to UNICEF.[231]

Another new aspect of memorial services that will undoubtedly receive further attention in the future is the "virtual temple" on the Internet. I have only come upon one such attempt to create an interactive online sacred space within the Rinzai Zen cyber world, the "Jōmō temple" (情網寺, "the temple of affectionate net"),[232] through which one could learn about Buddhism, order charms made of silk, participate in services on the Internet, and take a virtual journey of "spiritual and cultural experience." The virtual temple was part of a real temple, the Myōshinji subtemple Daiōji, whose progressive priest, in his attempts to reconcile traditional religious practice with modern technology, had planned memorial services for "lost information" (hard disks, software, files, etc.) to be held each year on the 24th of October, a date chosen for its numerical relation to the principle unit of the computer, the byte, of which there are 1,024 in a kilobyte. Perhaps such services are not within the realistic horizons of most traditional *danka*, perhaps the Zen temple of a traditional religion is too peripherical to younger potential users of "religion online," or perhaps sacred space is restricted to physical places where communal interaction or personal bodily experience is possible. In any case, when I talked to the priest Shokyū Ishiko in November 2000, due to the lack of interest no memorial services had been made, and visiting the site seemed to suggest that the virtual temple has not received proper attention to actually live up to its ideals. Using the Internet for interactive religious practice might change in the future, but (apart from online bulletin boards and photo galleries) contemporary Zen sites are merely used as new ways of communicating information and distributing already existing materials.

---

[231] The information is based on personal communication, but is also explained at his Website, www2.ocn.ne.jp/~seiho/jizou/19mizuko.01.htm.

[232] The temple presented itself at the now extinct homepage www.thezen.or.jp/, from which some of the information is taken.

Also, services (*kuyō*) for animals and inanimate things such as dolls, brushes, or electronic software are means of giving meaning (and life) to (the loss of) humanized objects, and of further income to individual priests and commercial enterprises, which might cosponsor such events.[233]

> In Buddhism, all has life. Memorial services for such things express our gratitude for having used them. As Buddhists we are not supposed to kill animals, but sometimes we have to in order to get something to eat. Memorial services for animals are ways of expressing the same kind of gratitude, and to say that we are sorry for taking their lives.

As a representative from the Kyōka Sentā explained to me.

Zen Buddhist mastery of death is a powerful resource. It not only secures high payments for ritual services and precept names,[234] it also contributes to the image of a strict, serious, and professional institution, capable of the "undramatization of death (as a traumatic event) through its "dramatization" (as ritual performance)" (Faure 1991, 184), while also reincorporating Zen funeral rituals as devotional teaching

---

[233] I have only seen such ceremonies in two Zen temples, neither of them belonging to the Myōshinji sect. At a subtemple in Tōfukuji a service for used pens and brushes was conducted by Zen priests in cooperation with *yamabushi* priests. At an independent (*tanritsu*) nunnery of the Zen lineage (Hōkyōji in Kyoto), I twice attended a service for dolls. In association with a company producing dolls (Kyoningyō Shūkōgyo Kyōdō Kumiai), two nuns and assisting priests chanted sutras for hundreds of dolls, later to be cremated in a cremation hall. On services for inanimate objects in Japan, see Kretschmer 2000.

[234] Some price examples from a Myōshinji temple in an Osaka suburb of the sutra-chanting services for one priests: *makuragyō*: 10,000 ¥, wake: 30,000 ¥, funeral: 30,000 ¥, cremation: 10,000 ¥, *kotsuage*: 10,000 ¥, each of the *nanoka* services: 10,000 ¥, the last service on the forty-ninth day: 30,000 ¥. Apart from these, the priest may be engaged to chant on the death anniversary, at *obon* and *higan*—typically 10,000 ¥ each. The funeral itself can, of course, be of a much larger budget if so required—for instance, if several priests are hired to perform the ceremonies. According to a survey, 87.5% of the Myōshinji priests charge more than 300,000 ¥ for the status name of *ingo*, and 10.4% charge more than a million ¥ (*Kenkyū hōkoku* 7, 7). The status names *koji* and *daishi* are less expensive, with 29.2% charging between 100,000 and 140,000 ¥, and 66% charging below 190,000 ¥ (ibid. 8).The Buddhist names (*imina* and *dōgō*) are only charged 50,000 ¥ by 41.6% and below 150,000 ¥ by 75.7%, the cost of such only being 20,000 ¥ including lunch, if taking the *jukai-e* ordination while alive (ibid. 51). According to the Japanese Consumer Association, the national average in 1992 per funeral was (counted in dollars) $20,800: $11,200 for the funeral home, $4,300 for the catering service, and $5,100 for the temple, the latter being for holding the wake, funeral, cremation, and first seven-day services, and giving the *kaimyō* (www.bpf.org/tsangha/tomatsusec.html). A full funeral service at a funeral hall can easily cost at least the same. On statistics from the Soto school, see SSSMC 1995, 124.

(ibid. 182). Myōshinji has an interest in both spiritualizing death, in negating or contextualizing funeral Buddhism. But contrary to some influential individuals, who have used their profession and/or status to protest against what they have seen as superstitious or irrelevant rituals and symbols connected to death,[235] it also has an interest in preserving funeral Buddhism. Keeping rituals, taboos, and prescribed codes of ritual behavior, maintaining the mystification of death, and securing the confidence with its lay users of the indispensability of the clergy is a necessary aspect of the religious institution. Few Myōshinji agents regard funerals to be "Zen," few regard taking care of funerals to be an important aspect of modern Zen Buddhism, few find funerals to give much religious merit—attitudes not differing significantly according to type of agency or affiliation.[236] As the director of the head office at the headquarters, Tsuda Seishō, expressed it in commenting on Japanese Buddhism as a funeral religion: "Zen in contemporary Japan is mostly folk religious practice (*minzoku gyōji*), it is not pure Zen (*junsui zen*). As I see it, this folkish practice is the biggest problem of today. But if we did not incorporate it, the teaching would not be able to spread in Japan. After all, we are not only funeral Buddhism (*sōshiki bukkyō*)."[237]

[235] Daitō Kokushi, the founder of Daitokuji, was said to have prohibited some funeral ceremonies; Shinran, the founding patriarch of what was later to become Jōdō Shinshū, wanted his dead body thrown in the Kamo river as food for fish; and more recently Hisamatsu Shin'ichi was said in his will to have forbidden any funeral to take place (*Shingyō kyōten*, 168). The "rebel" Akizuki Ryōmin would either ignore going to Buddhist funerals or go to weddings dressed in his Buddhist robe—both actions are seen to most Japanese to be highly inappropriate, the latter even a breaking of a cultural taboo (Akizuki 1990, 10–12).

[236] Of all surveyed 13.3% answered positively to the question of whether modern Zen sect(s) had an important role to play regarding funerals (*sōshiki*)—the *sesshin* participants being generally more positive (18.9%). Of the latter 1.4% thought funerals to be most "Zen-like" word and 10.9% among the three most "Zen-like" words, with the figures of the *zazenkai* and Muso Kyōkai participants being 0 for both. Of the *sesshin* group 9.5% thought funerals to give most merit (*kudoku*), 29.8% placing it among the three highest. Among the *zazen* participants 79.2% gave it the lowest score or did not include it, and 2.4% and 4.8% among the Musō Kyōkai group placed it highest and among the three highest. Attending a funeral once within the last year was answered positively by 18.9% (100 times by a single temple son) from the *sesshin* group. Only two persons (4.2%) from the *zazen* group had attended a funeral (twice), while the frequency among members from the Musō Kyōkai was more scattered (between one and ten times), with seventeen persons (41.5%) having attended once or more.

[237] See Rowe 2004 on funeral rituals and politics within the Sōtō sect.

Although funeral Buddhism is a negative term to most lay and clerical Buddhists,[238] funerals and memorial services are still important and proper things to do, as can also be seen by the many guidebooks on how to do what regarding funerals. With an unprecedented death boom in the country and a certain hometown (*furusato*) nostalgia for urbanites visiting ancestors in the countryside, the whole funeral industry (including Buddhist priests, undertakers, owners of graveyards, funeral companies, producers of incense, flowers, gifts, coffins, and so on) has a very bright future in the coming years. But competition from other (new) religions, from nonreligiosity and from the commercial funeral industry might further threaten the status of the (Zen) priests who "have lost respect and authority since the time of community rituals [i.e., held by funeral companies]" (Suzuki 2000, 171).[239] They can compete against the trends, distance themselves from popular and commercial practices, or maintain popularization without compromising with its traditional methods. Or, they can take part in the commercial businesslike management at the risk of further contributing to the image of superficial and "dead" Buddhism, an image the institution and its agents can only partly control. Since funeral companies, especially in larger cities, have become quite influential and professional in marketing their business, it can be a necessity to stay on good terms with them, as they might introduce new "customers" (and potential *danka*) to the priest, who, after all, is still the only one responsible for the memorial services and the one who usually has gravesites on temple ground. However, not all conduct memorial services with priests participating, and not all graveyards belong to temple property. Also, attempts to further spiritualize and humanize death—which can be quite idealistic for the many city priests who might not even know their temple users—have become matters of concern for the funeral companies worrying about their image of being too "cold." In a large institution with only an administrative center, individual priests and their communities of believers or *danka*

---

[238] As a more neutral alternative to the negative connotations of *sōshiki*, its synonym *sōsai* (葬祭) has been adopted by Buddhist scholars in recent years (Rowe 2004, 358, n. 1).

[239] A concrete example of this is when companies planning the funeral force the priest to limit his time for his ritual services (Suzuki 2000, 170). The "package solution" might exclude certain rituals or the performance of the priest altogether in order to make it faster, smoother, and more "modern." Sōka Gakkai, as a pure lay organization, uses no priests for funerals.

may stand in totally different positions, being more or less traditional, modern or postmodern. Maintaining and strengthening both its open hermeneutics as a popular religion and its attempts to spiritualize death as being both truly postmodern and Zen is a dilemma and a challenge that also points toward more general ideas, structures, and functions of religious practice in the relationship between the institution and its agents, the subject of the concluding chapter.

3.7 Summary

Earlier, I argued for categorizing rituals as a special kind of religious practice, the latter including also nonritualized actions, gatherings, education, cultivation, and institutional practices. I differentiated these into clerical and laity oriented contexts, the former subdivided into general monastic practice and rites of passage, and the latter according to temporal divisions: daily and recurrent rituals (worship, *zazen*, texts), calendrical rituals (seasonal, sectarian), local rituals, and rites of passage (ordination, rituals of sociocultural and biological order, rituals of death), some of the categories supplied with descriptions and analyses of concrete cases. Rituals as events and as processes were seen to be important aspects of both lay and clerical practice, as was the ideal of total ritualizing and sanctification of all aspects of life.

Kyōka (religious education, or "cultivation") I interpreted to be both a general hermeneutical strategy underlying all aspects of religious practice and a religious practice itself in accomplishing aims and generating ideas and practices of the institution. Both publication of texts, arranging and establishing rituals, gatherings and subinstitutions (movements, assemblies), as well as training monks, educating priests and priest wives, educating and training laypersons in becoming priests (*ango-e*), doing missionary work to attract new members (within the dilemma of not combatting too obviously with other sects), and cultivating the laity in becoming more sincere and actively affiliated "believers" (*shinto*) rather than just passive members or users (*danka*) are parts of the institutional arena of "cultivation." Propagating "same belief, same practice" (*dōshin dōgyō*) is not only directed at unifying the laity as a distinct and common category of agents in which institutional *habitus* is streamlined by canonized ideas (satori, Buddha nature, gratefulness), formalized and refined actions and behavior (*sugata*) and sincere belief (*shinjin*) and commitment to a totalized Zen world. It is also an ideal of approaching the laity

and clergy by ritualized actions identifying these categories, especially expressed through texts (democratizing doctrines and knowledge), *zazen* (becoming a one-time Buddha by one-time meditation), and lay ordinations in life (*jukai-e*) and after death, the latter two effectuating and declaring the person to become monk, Buddha's child, Buddha, and ancestor. As such, ritual events, processes, and totalized ritualization of life are within the sphere of *kyōka* practice.

However, rituals and *kyōka* strategy simultaneously ratifies existing bonds and strengthens hierarchies. This goes for both the monastery where monks are taught discipline (rank and pecking) order, for the clerical system where ranks, titles, emblems, and certificates secure a symbolic order in an institutionalized process, and for the relation between clerics and laity. In rituals at temples in general, and at clerical rites of passage and in large ceremonies at the main temple complex in particular, priests perform as religious specialists, identifying themselves with the patriarchs and the Buddha, just as the laity confirm their identity of being essentially of a different category, exemplified also by the periodic alms-rounds of the monasteries, where the exchange between the laity and the clergy is performed.

Not all priests agree with—or even read—the publications sent from the *honzan*, and not all representatives of the clergy and the laity act and think according to the prescribed ideals. Few practice *zazen*, though nearly all have a firm conviction of this (and the idea of satori) being true Zen. In spite of being paradigmatic to the sect, most seem to treat it as a cyclical ritual performed in memory of the time spent in the training hall or in performing legendary narratives from the past. A few "elitarian" priests as well as lay practitioners ("truth seekers") keep this as an ideal practice, the latter often being only slightly interested in strong institutional affiliation and rituals of another kind. Other groups seem to focus on one practice—e.g., the *goeikakai*, though the members are generally more committed to the institution, valuing different kinds of rituals (memorial services, attending family grave, worship) and with a high frequency and permanency of attendance. The type of religious affiliation and practice of this group, which constitute a rather large percentage of the "active members," can be related to their gender (women, who, except for *zazenkai*, generally are the most active participants in Japan) and age (mostly elderly with a long relationship to the local temple and with a more personal relation to death through the sheer number of deceased persons within their family and among associates). But commitment to "doing the right thing" (and

hopefully receiving the fruits of the merit of having done so) and to their interests in social gatherings are also important aspects of such practices, including the ones conducted by/through Myōshinji groups such as local *fujinkai* or the central Hanazonokai. Other active members include the temple sons, priest wives, and individuals who have a strong sense of commitment and/or sense of "meaning to mean it" as "firm believers" (*danshinto*). Although they may, as opposed to those with only particular interests (some *zazenkai* participants, many students at the university *sesshin*, and a lot of those *danka* hardly knowing to which sect they belong), also favor different kinds of rituals (e.g., funerals, dharma talks), there is a general tendency for certain rituals to be more popular than others. Seasonal and "common" (e.g., nonsectarian) rituals are much more frequently attended than sectarian rituals (memorials for Buddha and the patriarchs), just as rituals related to death and afterlife are frequented more often than "cultivating activities" within the sect (*zazen*, dharma talks, study groups). This is reflected also in the activities of temples, some of which (especially at the *honzan*) are not even intended to include active participation from lay people. In a spectrum extending from activities and rituals related directly to the Myōshinji sect, to Zen, to Buddhist, and to common rituals and activities, institutional importance and relevance seem inversely proportional to the frequency of attendance.

Some rituals are more formal and canonical than others. The form (*sugata*) and prescribed meaning of *zazen* is more restricted and refined and often kept as a single or central ritual, framed or "wrapped" by minor rites pointing toward it. *Zazen* is paradigmatic of true Zen and on the same level of "seriousness" as rituals related to death. Like calendrical rituals, rituals related to funerals, memorials, and daily worship at the temple or in front of the *butsudan* are through *kyōka* hermeneutics ascribed (Zen) Buddhist relevance. This is achieved both through holding dharma talks at funerals or through publications spiritualizing death, but also through correlating different kinds of practices at specific periods—e.g., conducting children's assemblies at Buddha's birthday or having a *zazenkai* in the week up to Buddha's *bodhi* day, or by creating ritual complexes (e.g., *niso sambutsuki* or the whole ritual calendrical year). Also, what I termed cultural values are buddhized, especially those related to repaying received favors by expressing gratitude to the ancestors, patriarchs, and Buddha(s)—and thus by showing commitment to the institution. In principle, all religious practice is prescribed as Zen practice, though some ritual contexts are

more open to individual interpretation and performance. Rituals and practices conducted at local temples and at home are less restricted and formal than the ones performed at the *honzan*. Local festivals extending beyond institutional framework, as exemplified by two cases, are even more open to less formality and more "folk" elements—though the priest might have an overall buddhized hermeneutical position with which to legitimate them.

That some rituals are more semantically and functionally "fixed" than others does not contradict the fact that they are also polyvalent. Meditation is also a social event, and chanting sutras or showing gratitude is also seen as rituals of purification on the Buddha way. Texts are means of exegetic analysis but also means of magical instrumentalism, just as pilgrimage is both tourism and means of achieving or attracting otherworldly powers. Craving for merit and/or this-worldly merits may itself be an aspect of a soteriological process of purifying oneself and contributing to the salvation of all sentient beings, just as rituals of death might be sorrowful or joyous, a social burden and a source of financial income, whether called "true Zen" or not. Priests and laity alike will often characterize rituals as "merely symbolic" or "just tradition." This should not be seen as a "Protestant Buddhist" rejection of rituals nor as a humble expression of not having integrated the correct understanding or "essence." Particularly for calendrical rituals and rites of passage, a certain element of social gathering and play to some seem to be the major reason for joining rituals. This does not make participation nonreligious. Following Humphrey and Laidlaw, it is merely a position within the spectrum of possible grades of ascriptions of commitment, form, feeling, meaning, and belief, just as it is one of the aspects of *kyōka* strategy and activities for the institution to both sort out and combine these kinds of practices and (lack of) interests into one great narrative or a multiple vehicle of legitimate "skillful means." This will be further discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Plural Zen

What constitutes contemporary Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism? First, one has to ask whose Zen, which Zen? There are different agents, interests, meanings, and contexts with which to identify Zen, institutional ones being those upon which I have focused in this volume. The idealized Suzuki-Zen on one end of the spectrum and the pejorative term "Funeral Zen" on the other constitute two extreme models, both of which are reductionist. Negating the first, one could say that Zen is *also* funerals, this-worldly interests, power games, ranks, and hierarchies in being a very normal and traditional religion. Suzuki did not describe actual Zen Buddhism but gave normative and idealized versions from within the religious landscape he was actively engaged in constructing. Truth seekers, intellectuals, scholar-minded priests, and university teachers to a large extent follow some of these ideal versions, which in essence are not significantly different from earlier Buddhist theological and scholastic discourses. Suzuki and the Suzuki-effect had enormous impact on Western scholars and practitioners being seduced by spiritualized and rationalized versions of "pure Zen." As such they are interesting but not unique examples of the multifaceted invented traditions and complex "pizza-effects" that also constitute living religion. Complementing the other, Zen is more than funerals, funerals are more than business; Zen is also *zazen*, sincere engagement in religious assemblies and practice with spiritual meaning and existentially apprehended world-views. Likewise, accusations of Zen merely being a funeral business are voices from within the rhetorics, and normative discourses of the tradition, its critics and the interrelated network of Zen Buddhists, the media, and scholars. Funeral Zen is genuine Zen, but Zen is more encompassing. There are definitely aspects making Zen Buddhism unique within the comparative study of religion, but shifting perspective from theological and ideal to its living and "real" world, Zen Buddhism in its plurality is also a "typical" religion, the representation of which depends on the discourses and interactions between the institution and its users and interpreters.

Umbrella Zen

Asking whose and which Zen is also asking about discursive positions and strategies of representation and practice. The power to define true Myōshinji Zen is not univocal. In one sense the institution as "inclusive Zen" is like an umbrella. It embraces different agents, practices, and hermeneutical strategies, accepting "folk," agnostic belief, elitist postmodernists, and intellectuals, magic and this-worldly instrumentalism. The institution in this perspective is a dynamic organism, neither streamlining nor controlling its members, nor leaving them in an open void or chaotic melting pot. Grand Narratives, sacred place and personnel are definitely promoted, but in a "more or less Zen" hermeneutic field in which discourses and practices are integrated and ideally buddhized (or "Zen-ized") and naturalized as true religion. Striving for this-worldly benefits or paying homage to the ancestors can be seen as side-products, as ways leading toward other practices, or—if achieved with a no-mind—itself as true Zen Buddhist multifaceted actions. This kind of strategy is not only typical of the local priest, seeing himself necessarily adjusting to the circumstances of reality. It is also in the institution's interests to integrate all aspects of life, securing the sect's symbolic and economical existence in a Myōshinji Zen buddhized and yet syncretistic context.

Transcending boundaries or blurring categories are expressions of broadening the institutional umbrella. These can easily be legitimated through doctrinal references to Mahayana and especially Chan/Zen Buddhism, in which the enlightened layman and the laicized master are ideals, and affirming, negating, and transgressing sacred space are positions pointing to different aspects of both theory and practice. Institutional structure and the roles and practices of agency have also undergone great changes in modern history, especially during the Meiji era and the period after the Second World War. Zen Buddhism and the Myōshinji sect have had to redefine and legitimate themselves, relating tradition and reformation, family structure and individualized religiosity, rituals and rationality, institutional affiliation and freedom of belief—the reverse influence (from Zen to society at large) being moderate, if present at all. The Myōshinji sect has been threatened by secularization tendencies, unstable member relations, and a worried priesthood, whose greatest concern is to get a son inheriting the temple. Lack of future priests, the challenge of which has sparked new initiatives such as part-time monastic courses, paradoxically complements

the fact that the number of priests and temples in proportion to actual numbers of adherents seems quite adequate, and in the future might turn out to be a problem of excess—i.e., is there really a continuous need for so many priests and temples?

Challenging its adherents to become active believers by choice is one strategy of managing such institutionally important problems. Children may be socialized in Myōshinji affiliated kindergartens, temple sons and priest wives may be educated in courses, and priests may further develop their skills and "priestness" in postmonastic study groups. The Hanazono University offers academic education for all students and specialized courses in Zen and Buddhism primarily for those young men aspiring to take over their father's temples. Just like priest wives in some ways still have to fight for being acknowledged in the patriarchal society and institutional world, the nuns are still behind their male colleagues in terms of rights and image. For example, training facilities for women are sparse, whereas young men can either practice in the Zen monastic training halls or in the less prestigious lay training courses.

"Cultivating" and religiously educating the laity (*kyōka*) are projects of different practices, strategies, and agencies, mostly administered through organs at the headquarters, i.e., the Kyōka Sentā and the Hanazonokai, or locally at the individual temples. Through publications to the laity, religious and social gatherings (*kai*), yearly ritual events (*nenjū gyōji*), rites of passage, and encouragement to each day live a "whole Zen life," the institution challenges the laity to become more active and creates the image of being an active religious organization concerned about its members. Although "shopping for *danka*" is not an activity voiced too officially in the unwritten gentlemen's agreement among the traditional Buddhist sects, the institution obviously has an interest in attracting new members. Nonreligious individuals should become religious, users should become members, truth seekers should become Myōshinji affiliated truth seekers. Common religion ought to be interpreted or practiced within buddhized, "Zen-ized," and "Myōshinji-ized" frameworks, though in some cases remaining within the division-of-labor syncretistic system also has its advantages. Single rituals can be part of larger processes, just as rites of passage can become sanctified peak events, correct form can become correct mental attitude and vice versa. Family-oriented (*ie*) religiosity can become individualized, and individual participation can rebound and spread to group, community, and nationwide participation (e.g., through one of the movements of the institution). Without making it too "folkish," cultivating the laity is also bringing Zen to

the masses, the center to the periphery, *zazen* to the main halls of the local temples, orthodoxy and orthopraxy into loose ideas and random practice—though in some circumstances the opposite are also accepted as part of the cultivation strategy. Most important of all, and including the above ideals, is turning passive affiliates (*danka*) with low levels of belonging into active and devoted believers (*danshinto*) with high levels of belonging and commitment. This ideally will secure a stable sacred community and a modern religious organization.

Monks taking a long university education and reducing their monastic stay and *shukke* role to a limited period, and priests taking side jobs, widening their temple business to include other facilities, and balancing between being neither too much nor too little socialized or religious are examples of laicizing the clergy development. Democratization of texts and practices, the establishment of the lay organization Hanazo-nokai, the building of the meditation hall for the general public, and the possibility of becoming a priest with only short monastic stays are examples of the opposite direction, the laity approaching the arena of the clergy. Publications from the institution often favor the idea and practices of "playing the same game." Identity and communality are stressed in the name of *kyōka*-cultivation and education, where an active laity with the "same belief and same practice" is an ideal, and where traditional clerical practices (e.g., *zazen*, studying doctrines) are offered alongside ritual possibilities of identification with monk-, saint-, or Buddhahood (e.g., taking the precepts, dying, totalizing a "Zen life"), ratified with symbols ("blood vessel," precept name precepts chart). Symbolic identity and transgressing categories are certainly aspects of especially modern Japanese Zen Buddhism.

Hierarchical Zen

But there is also another important facet of living Zen. Most kinds of Buddhism, including classic Indian and modern Japanese Zen, have always had an element of elitism. Monkhood and the clergy have often been the hierarchically superior part, the Buddhist "default value" with which the laity could and can define and reflect itself. This is not surprising, since these have had the position to represent the religion in discourses legitimating a sacred genealogy and "Great Tradition." Monastic training is the symbol of Zen practice par excellence and the period in which the monks learn discipline, hierarchical order and

ritual expertise, complementing the intellectual and doctrinal learning at university—all of which make them religious specialists. Furthermore, monastic and clerical Buddhism have often competed and benefited from being the favored partners of the ruling powers, enabling them to participate in influencing society and history. The *gozan* structure of medieval Japan as well as the rigid systems of the Tokugawa era were periods under which Zen Buddhism flourished. Art, architecture, sectarian developments, and institutional hierarchies made Zen part of what later came to be called "traditional religion." Popularization of certain religious practices such as funeral services helped spread institutional relevance, but complementarily expanded the power to maintain and continuously generate discourses and institutions of a patriarchal lineage of enlightened masters. Genealogies are still valued and used in contemporary Myōshinji, expressed in symbols, inheritance structures, temple and clerical ranks.

Being neither a static nor coherent system embodied in single individuals, certain discourses and practices within the Myōshinji institution (publications, voices of individual priests, ritual settings) do stress hierarchy and the importance of keeping the boundaries distinct. Differences are consecrated in ritual performances especially at the main center, where the clergy in a microcosmic setup act as religious specialists (or as patriarchal saints or even Buddha) of a "different kind" than the laity. The processual progression within the clerical ranks showing difference of degree (high/low) is also performed at clerical rites of passage, where the difference in kind (clergy/laity) is manifested. Concepts and doctrines with more or less coherent "Great Narratives" may be explicated by referring to the long and dense tradition, but often arguments are not needed. The "essence" of the sect is itself contained and expressed through the symbols (e.g., *shukke*, satori, *zazen*) and power of the institution. Such "essence"—whether vaguely conceptualized through metaphorical association or consciously determined adherence to doctrines—are agreed upon by most clerics and laypersons of the sect, as my surveys showed. The rigid monastic system and practice is typical Buddhist but also resembles other symbols and institutions of Japanese culture. The sumo wrestler, the geisha, or the tea master have all gone through similar formal training in training halls with kinship, ranking system, and hierarchies, being socialized to a distinct terminology and image, receiving certificates and titles allowing them to perform in public. Although such worlds to most Japanese are closed and rather exotic, they are seen to quintessentially express ritualized training, and

priests are seen to be wandering images representing Japanese culture and traditional religion (as opposed to new religions or nonreligion). Apart from earning merit by being social persons able to do things with words and rituals, their symbolic value is an important means of securing the goodwill of most Japanese, the attitudes of which are also part of measuring and creating the image and practice of the institution, pointing to the "essence" of Zen and Japanese culture.

The main center in Kyoto is part of, and yet also symbolizes and encompasses the sect as, a "Great Tradition," as "institutionalized Zen." The temple complex, with its seven halls, is a microcosmic center expressing ideals and institutional relations, and at which clerical rituals are performed and to which institutional pilgrimages are arranged. The headquarters, with its different offices, is the administrative center, defining and representing the official institution. As such, the main temple is superior to and the model of the local temples, just as the clergy are superior to the laity, masters superior to priests, monks (men) superior to nuns (women), believers superior to *danka* and "users," and Japanese superior to foreigners.

Although such hierarchically arranged dichotomies may correlate, it does not mean that the clergy themselves practice an idealized Zen. Surveys, talks with priests, and attending different ritual assemblies explicated that Zen (and institutional) ideals and symbols are only indirectly practiced in reality. Only few priests (teach their sons how to) meditate, speculate about satori, or live a *shukke*-life after the monastic stay, the majority living an "ordinary" life with wife and children, and only practicing "Zen" at certain ritual occurrences. Certainly not all priests agree with or are concerned about the politics and activities at the main center, nor do all study the publications and surveys from then main center. Some feel more "Zen-like" than others, actively climbing the ladder of cultivation toward a more or less specified spiritual and institutional goal. The least engaged ones in the spectrum probably do not care much about sectarian affiliation, genealogical lineage, or doctrinal systems. "Pure Zen," advocated most explicitly by postmodern intellectuals on the fridges of institutional affiliation and responsibility, is a critique of institutionalized religion with its ranks, rituals, and conventions. Criticism from such voices may, however, from another perspective be a (more or less disguised) aspect also of institutional Zen, accusations of "Funeral Zen" being a concept stressing the relevance of a more purified Zen. Likewise, institutional Zen to a certain extent has an interest in incorporating such critique as part of a dynamic

"double standard" of including (and promoting) difference, openness, and vagueness—and yet being a strict and pure *shukke* religion.

Power Play and Exchange

Much of the institutionalized religious practice and *kyōka* hermeneutics can be viewed within a different order of strategic interests. Identity, communality, and transgressing boundaries are also instances of what Bourdieu calls "misrecognition," a denial of power plays, dressed in another language and transferred to other domains, naturalizing and sacralizing the institution and the inherent hierarchical orders. It works with the logic of "symbolic alchemy," wrapping strategic interests in cosmic perspectives, instances of which would be transforming work into religious training, dining into devotion, acting into "extended practice," the institution into a sacred community, *zaike* into *shukke*, lay person into Buddha, gift-giving and exchange into soteriological practice, and eternal debts to the Buddha, the ancestors, the patriarchs, and the institution, debts that can only be repaid relatively by commitment, belief, and following the rules. Such focus on power relations and strategic interests is important, and the whole project of cultivating and educating (especially) the laity certainly should also be seen as an image-creating maneuver in presenting a modern, considerate, spiritually and socially robust religious institution.

Focusing too one-sidedly on top-down relations, however, is too reductionist. Agents and interest groups are not easily categorized as essentially distinct entities, and the empirical realities also reveal exchange, reciprocity, and down-up power influence.

The laity can "misrecognize" the institution in clothing instrumental actions (e.g., *riyaku*) into soteriological aspiration or funeral negotiations into committed belief, and the local priest can wrap financial calculation into *kyōka* terminology, social discrimination into doctrinal multiplicity, or securing temple inheritance into sectarian consciousness. The laity and individual priests can exercise power by simply being noninterested in institutional matters, the former by choosing not to participate in sect-related practice, by ascribing an underprivileged role to Myōshinji in the religious division of labor, or even by choosing another religion—or alternatively being nonreligious, handing over funeral arrangements to secular companies. This indeed is a relevant and continuously threatening aspect of the politics and practice the contemporary Myōshinji

sect has to face. More positively, quite a few laypersons actually prefer distinct categories between religious specialists and the common people, just like many local priests seem to be keen on the central temple and the institutional Zen being distinct from (and yet also positively influencing) the local traditions. The nature of keeping boundaries naturally depend on individual agents and contexts. Both surveys and observing practice suggest that many find it a (more or less consciously acknowledged) ideal to adhere to a "double standard," including the possibilities within the umbrella-institution to be oriented toward a more or less inclusive or exclusivist frame of ideas and practices. Some will tend to associate with "exclusive Zen" in adopting ideas and practices of what they find to be a coherent system of Pure Zen, with or without a strong institutional affiliation. Experienced zazen practitioners, who are often also well versed in (Zen) Buddhist classics and know the ritual procedures by heart, will typically belong to this class, though *zazenkai* are also occasions at which first-timers will have a taste of "monastic Zen," leaving it as a one-time experience. On the other end of the spectrum, some remain passively affiliated through birth or tradition, mainly using the local temple and priest only on certain occasions such as death within the family. Some choose to have a more or less active relationship with the sect, either in one of the organized movements (e.g., Hanazonokai, *goeikakai*), in some of the semi-institutional confraternities (*kō*) or gatherings at the main or local temple. As individually engaged practitioners, some may focus on one or several practices and adhere to "single stories" of the large complex of doctrines, concepts, and ideas within the Zen "Grand Narratives." Most members have a pragmatic attitude of believing, practicing, and ascribing meaning to matters that may or may not be directly in line with the ideals of the institution. Affiliation need not be limited to sectarian segregation but may be seen as a natural (or random) part of a holistic system, of a more or less agreed-upon division of labor in which the local Zen temple serve some functions, the Shinto shrine others. As such, Zen may be a compartmentalized domain of one's life, the engagement with which is "practically religious" and pragmatically so. In spite of ideal hermeneutical ideals, there are few restrictions and demands, and being a Zen Buddhist in Japan to most people is both easy and comfortable—one can buy charms on the Internet, adhere to an ideal of "natural affirmation," or become a Buddha by dying.

Religious practice and surveys also suggest that power relations are neither univocal nor unidirectional. There are many layers and chan-

nels leading or directing the circulation of power and interests. An aspect of this is when consecrating boundaries also allows transgressing them. Just like it is necessary to remember (and show gratitude to) the ancestors in order to forget them, ritually and institutionally conferring, realizing, and consecrating the essence of an individual and the role of an agent is a prerequisite to being authorized to transcend it and transgress the boundary defining it. Like the wild Chan masters transgressing domains of enlightenment, insanity, culture, and untamed nature, modern Zen priests in realizing and expressing their identity as such (in a less dramatic way) can successfully adopt characteristics from a layman's life of the "ordinary world." Contrary to the passive and unengaged *danka* (the concept itself, as opposed to its semantic other-part *danshinto*, negates consciously chosen religious identity), the *danshinto* as a conscious, active, and engaged "true believer" can ratify his or her institutional and "essential" identity by transgressing the boundary of their own category and/or approaching the clerical domain, as exemplified by the ideals of the enlightened laymen and modern thinkers such as D. T. Suzuki. Such involvement seems to generate a "spillover," a rebounding and self-increasing process in which *kyōka* strategies are more easily promoted and members more easily involved in playing the same reciprocal game of harvesting and distributing the fruits of a common power and merit field, *hanazono*. Keeping the balances between exaggerating and ignoring boundaries and diversities according to complex and dynamic relations of agency and practice are Archimedean points of most Buddhist communities and discourses, and certainly also for modern Japanese Zen.

Zen Rituals and Practical Meaning

The nature and frequency of participating in the different kinds of rituals within the sect reflects diversity, but also some common characteristics.

Daily or periodic worship to most people means praying and making offerings to the ancestors in front of the home altar or at the temple ground. Attending the family grave is one of the most widespread practices, especially for elder women and at certain yearly events such as *obon*. Attending common and seasonal yearly rituals such as *obon* and New Year is much more widespread than participating in *kyōka* assemblies such as *zazenkai* or study groups and the more specifically sectarian

ritual events such as memorial days for Shakasama's enlightenment or the patriarchs and sect founders. The latter are mostly performed as formalized ceremonies at the main temple, while the common rituals have a much stronger element of sociality and leisure, though cultivating activities such as dharma talks and prescriptive interpretations in manuals and pamphlets may assist the adherents in giving such ritual events a touch of buddhized discourse and sectarian relevance. *Higan* as a calendrical event celebrating both equinoxes and elements from Buddhist legends is an example of the multivocality of rituals; from a soteriological perspective it is an occasion to cross to the "other shore" (*higan*), to the sphere of enlightenment and no-mind; but for most Japanese it is simply a day to mark the passage of time and show gratitude and return received favors to the ancestors. Also, rites of passage are used and understood in different ways. Trying to overcome the dark image of simply being a funeral institution, Myōshinji in written materials and at dharma talks spiritualize and existentialize (rituals related to afterlife and) death, and like other Buddhist sects it has attempted to include other "life-affirming" rituals related to, for instance, birth, youth, and marriage. Most Japanese and Myōshinji adherents, however, still prefer Shinto shrines for the latter occasions, and in spite of the negative image of funerals and memorial services as real Zen Buddhist practices, most use and see these as skillful means of helping the deceased to the "other side." Although many may see such rituals as merely the proper thing to do (or even as a necessary burden), it would be reductionist to see them as purely mechanical and instrumentalist actions. Creating merit for the ancestors also purifies and accumulate merit to the agent, who may also invest deep emotions, feel "peace of mind," and have moral reasons for keeping the extended kinship alive or transcending it in the process of waning memorization. Likewise, taking the precepts to many (of the few actually undergoing this ceremony) seems primarily to be a ritually purifying action and a way to show and achieve deeper sectarian commitment as true disciples of Buddha. Even a more "constrained" (in terms of formality and hermeneutical tradition) ritual such as *zazen* is used in different semantic and practice contexts; the truth seeker searching for Buddha nature, the companies sending their employees to temples to learn discipline, the university student attending for getting credits, the temples using it as memorial services, the mildly interested just wanting an exotic experience. Just like taking the precepts back to "ordinary life" *may* be actualized by some,

some may take *zazenkai* experiences back home to live a "Zen life," the ideals put forth by the instructors being possible choices to adopt. Diversity of motives, procedures, and formality are perhaps best expressed at pilgrimages and local temple festivals. Although often wrapped in buddhized discourse, such events are characteristically different form the performances at the main temple in being less formal, more open, and much more lively. This-worldly benefits may be encouraged and offered, trans- or nonsectarian groups may participate or even arrange such ritual practices, and the sociality of the local community is at least as pronounced as during the calendrical rituals.

Ritual practices have many layers; one practice may influence or generate another, deeper experience and understanding may develop in time, correct form may trigger pure faith, and vice versa. What from an outsider's point of view may appear to be coherent systems being expressed through symbolic rituals, or what may officially be the explicit motive, aim, or ideal of a practice, is not necessarily the accomplishment that determines the legitimacy or successfulness of participating. The "side effects" of monastic practice (making friends, earning merit, learning ritual behavior, etc., rather than striving for satori or nirvana) or the "side effects" of Japanese women attending English classes (sociality, feeling good, killing time, etc., rather than actually learning to speak English) may not be stated or consciously comprehended as such. But often they seem to be just as important rationales of practice, just as attending a dharma talk, a *zazenkai*, or a funeral may have a hermeneutically well-defined agenda with dozens of legitimate "side effects" or motivating factors, from concrete aims to general well-being. Participating in rituals itself to many is often more important than playing the game correctly and understanding the rules. Ritualized formalization is a means and sign of ritual participation. But it is also a quality that can be graded and cultivated—most explicitly expressed by the priests "learning by doing"—and complemented by increasing levels of meaning, belief, and understanding. Such reservoirs of formalization and meaning, structure and function, are within the umbrella of institutionalized Myōshinji Zen and its individual members or users—even though the different agents may not seem to play the same game or be part of the same arena or agenda.

Zen and the Study of Religion

Postmodern disenchantment is a valid frame of reference explaining the presumable loss of meaning in former religious meaning systems. Apparent discrepancy between ideal and real, between textual and practical religiosity, also needs reference to the structural nature of religious behavior and human mentality. Religion and religiosity are domains within a broader field of culture and behavior that might be compartmentalized or integrated, ascribed deep meaning or overbearing neglect. There is thus no genealogical or transcendental attributes marking out either Zen or the Japanese to have any essential bonds tying them together. Most Japanese women are more engaged in shopping and most young men in reading manga and listening to J-pop, and few would ascribe autumn moon-viewing in a Zen temple to be especially "Zen." Japanese Buddhist priests are trained in being both socially robust and religiously fluent. Compared to other Asian Buddhist countries they are relatively well-educated and secularized, respected as religious experts and ordinary citizens. They are not wild, crazy, or refractory, they do not tear apart holy scriptures or say dirty things (in public). Zen Buddhists are neither (all) enlightened, nor (all) totally passive and ignorant funeral Buddhists. Although Japanese culture is not essentially "Zen," and Zen Buddhism is not essentially Japanese, most living Japanese Zen Buddhism can still be said to be a typical expression of Japanese religiosity, and Japanese religion typically represented in Zen Buddhist sects and practice. Representing Zen by kōan, shouts, tea ceremonies, meditating masters, empty circles, and as a tradition beyond words are naturally still valid expressions of what make Zen Buddhism interestingly different from other religious traditions and discourses. Representing Zen naturally depends on focus and aim. Recent years' research on its living traditions in all its complexity has shown that (Japanese Zen) Buddhism is (also) a "common" religion with ideas and practices comparable to other living manifestations of human religious thought and behavior. Oscillating between different levels of representations is always an ongoing and "extended practice" in a never-ending process of drawing the maps of the territories we are interested in drawing.

APPENDIX

Questionnaires

The aim of the surveys was to compare with and complement the results of the many questionnaires sent to Myōshinji priests from the Kyōka Sentā at the main center in Kyoto. My own questionnaires were on a much smaller scale and less ambitious, including only 194 responding persons in all. The results from such figures naturally cannot claim to represent the laity of the sect but do, however, express some general tendencies related to attitudes and practices.

The data are based on three different groups of agents on four different occasions. In May 1997 I had the students in two classes (first and second year) at the Religious Studies Department of Hanazono University fill out questionnaires primarily to get a figure of how many students came from temple families and how many planned to continue a clerical career. Fifty-five students responded. In autumn 2000 I distributed surveys on three different occasions. I had revised the content of the questionnaires to include other questions. Although the gathered data from the different surveys are thus not based on the same questions, I have chosen to include the relevant 1997 results in the columns defined by the questionnaires from 2000, missing questions/answers indicated by a stroke (–). On the other hand, questions only raised to students (in both 1997 and 2000) are treated separately as "questionnaire B," though these questions were actually on the same questionnaire sheets to the students. Of the 110 students participating in the annual university "retreat" (*ōzesshin*), which at that year was held at Myōshinji in September 2000, 74 returned the questionnaires handed out at the end of the course. In October of the same year, 24 participants at a *zazenkai* at the Taishū Zendō in Kyoto and at the main center 41 members of the Musō Kyōkai participating in the annual assembly of the movement (which was also the celebration of their 50th anniversary) helped answer (almost identical) questionnaires. The circumstances of the latter only gave a low response rate: I had a priest help me hand out 100 questionnaires to the Musō Kyōkai members when they arrived in buses. There was simply no time or natural breaks in the hectic program for introducing and having them

fill out the questionnaires in peace and quiet (most did so when waiting for the parish group photos to be taken). Some of the questions were thus only partly answered.

Whereas some questions were open and/or called for multiple choice, others were closed and scaled. I included no comments or explanations in the questionnaires, and both questions and concepts were thus totally up to the respondents to interpret. For instance, "Which religion do you believe in?" is a typical question in Japanese surveys, though both "religion" and "belief" are highly problematic terms. That quite a few did not respond to this is due to this ambiguousness as well as to the voices from those consciously denying to have or believe in a religion. "Family's religion" covers both parents' religion as well as household's religion, depending on where the respondent lives (i.e., in their parents' or their own household). Not all questions aiming at valuing variables on scaled spectra were answered. The main reason for this seems to be the nature of some of the possible variables. For instance, some concepts and practices seem not to have deserved value numbers at all—the actual ascribed value of a concept like riyaku probably being even lower when considering this. Also, some *zazenkai* participants did not answer or only partly filled out a scale of merit values, a few referring to doctrinal points claiming Zen not to give merit. For reasons of brevity, I have only indicated these scaled data with their respective average values and, in one case, the median. Some of the more detailed characteristics as well as cross-related frequencies are to be found in (primarily the footnotes of) the main text.

Questionnaire A

	Musō Kyōkai (MK) (n = 41)	**Taishū Zendō *zazenkai*** (TZZ) (n = 24)	**Hanazono University *ōzesshin*** (HUO) (n = 74)	**Religious studies students** (RSS) (n = 55)
1. Age				
<20	0	0	61	38
21–40	13	9	8	15
41–60	10	9	3	2
61–	11	6	1	0
No answer	7	0	1	0

2. Sex	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
m	0	19	57	5
f	41	5	17	48
No answer	0	0	0	2

3. What is your religion?
貴方の信じている宗教は何ですか。

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Zen	21	4	1	–
Buddhism	9	16	41	–
Other	0	4	1	–
No answer	11	0	31	–

4. What is your family's religion?
貴方の家族の宗教は何ですか。

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Zen	39	6	40	–
Buddhism	0	13	14	–
No answer	2	5	20	–

5. How Zen-like do you think the following words are on a scale from 1 to 8?
次の言葉を貴方が禅的だと思うが順に 1 から 8 まで番号を付けてください。
(1 indicating highest and 8 the lowest value. Numbers showing average)

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Peace of mind (*anjin* 案心)	3.83 (n = 30)	3.58 (n = 19)	5.49 (all n = 74)	–
Merit (*kudoku* 功徳)	3.62 (n = 29)	4.93 (n = 15)	4.35	–

Enlightenment (*satori* 悟り)	3.7 (n = 30)	2.58 (n = 19)	2.55	–
Zen sect (*zenshū* 禅宗)	3.14 (n = 28)	3.26 (n = 19)	3.58	–
Meditation (*zazen* 座禅)	3.6 (n = 27)	1.7 (n = 20)	1.76	–
Pure belief (*shinjin* 信心)	3.18 (n = 29)	4.59 (n = 17)	4.03	–
Funerals (*sōshiki* 葬式)	6.7 (n = 26)	7.5 (n = 14)	5.85	–
This-worldly benefits (*riyaku* 利益)	7.5 (n = 25)	7.39 (n = 13)	7.32	–

6. What do you think is the most important role(s) of contemporary Zen Buddhism to take care of?
現在的な禅宗の大切な役割とは何だと思いますか。(Multiple choice)

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Social problems (社会的な問題)	13	7	13	7
Spiritual problems (精神的な問題)	27	17	49	37
Supporting sect and temple (本派や寺院の護持)	10	2	14	3
Funerals (葬式)	5	0	14	2

7. How important do you think the following yearly rituals are on a scale from 1 to 9? 次の年中行事を貴方が大切だと思う順に 1 から 9 まで番号を付けてください。
(1 indicating highest and 9 the lowest value. Numbers showing average)

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
New Year (*shōgatsu* 正月)	2.42 (n = 35)	3.41 (n = 17)	3.5 (all n = 74)	–

Buddha's birthday (*hanamatsuri* 花祭り)	5.12 (n = 31)	5.0 (n = 11)	5.09	–
Buddha's enlightenment day (*jōdō-e* 成道会)	6.13 (n = 29)	3.31 (n = 13)	5.05	–
Buddha's nirvana (*nehan-e* 涅槃会)	5.6 (n = 30)	4.25 (n = 12)	5.26	–
Obon (お盆)	2.75 (n = 37)	3.26 (n = 19)	2.96	–
Feeding the hungry spirits (Segaki-e 施餓鬼会)	4.87 (n = 32)	6.64 (n = 11)	4.28	–
Equinox (Higan-e 彼岸会)	3.85 (n = 34)	4.06 (n = 16)	3.99	–
Memorial for founder (Kaisanki 開山忌)	5.9 (n = 32)	6.17 (n = 12)	4.86	–
Memorial for Bodhidharma (Darumaki 達磨忌)	6.65 (n = 32)	5.63 (n = 11)	5.84	–

8. How meritorious do you think the following rituals and religious practices are on a scale from 1 to 11? 次の行事や修行を貴方が功徳があると思う順に１から１１まで番号を付けてください。
(1 indicating highest and 11 the lowest value. Numbers showing average)

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Sutra copying (*shakyō* 写経)	4.73 (n = 26)	4.36 (n = 14)	4.18 (n all = 74)	–
Meditation (*zazen* 座禅)	4.68 (n = 25)	1.67 (n = 18)	2.62	–
Alms-giving (*fuse* 布施)	5.32 (n = 25)	3.67 (n = 12)	4.82	–
Worship (*reihai* 礼拝)	3.38 (n = 31)	3.79 (n = 14)	3.43	–

Religious songs (*goeika* ご詠歌)	4.57 (n = 28)	7.75 (n = 12)	–	–
Yearly rituals (*nenjū gyōji* 年中行事)	7.36 (n = 22)	7.92 (n = 12)	5.11	–
Funerals (*sōshiki* 葬式)	8.18 (n = 22)	9.55 (n = 9)	4.49	–
Memorial services (*kuyō* 供養)	3.86 (n = 28)	4.5 (n = 12)	3.69	–
Keeping precepts (*jikai* 持戒)	7.5 (n = 24)	6.09 (n = 11)	5.18	–
Pure belief (*shinjin* 信心)	4.0 (n = 30)	4.54 (n = 13)	–	–
Movement of Thankfulness (*okagesama undō* おかげさま運動)	9.0 (n = 19)	9.54 (n = 11)	–	–

9. Which of the following activities or rituals have you participated in at a Zen temple within the last year? (__ times).
貴方はここ一年以内に禅宗のお寺の活動や行事に参加しましたか。[1]

	MK	TZZ	HUO	RSS
Visit family grave (*haka mairi* 墓参り)	3.5 (maximum 300)	1 (maximum 35)	0 (maximum 300)	0
Meditation assembly (*zazenkai* 座禅会)	0	12 (maximum 80)	0	0

[1] Numbers are showing median value to give a more balanced view of all respondents. One respondent from the Hanazono university *ōzesshin* claimed to have visited the family grave 300 times, while most of the others had not been there at all.

Study group (*kenshūkai* 研修会)	0	0	0	0
Sutra copy assembly (*shakyōkai* 写経会)	1	0	0	–
Funeral (*sōshiki* 葬式)	0	0	0 (maximum 100)	–
Memorial service (*kuyō* 供養)	1.5	0	0	–
Song assembly (*eikakai* 詠歌会)	15 (maximum 40)	0	–	–
Other (ほか)	0	0	0	0

Questionnaire B[2]

	Religious studies classes (RSS) (n = 55)	**Hanazono University *ōzsesshin*** (HUO) (n = 74)
1. Family		
Temple family 寺院出身者	15	36
Lay family 在家出身者	33	28
No answer	7	10

[2] These questions were asked only to the students at the religious studies classes and those participating in the university *ōzesshin*.

2. Why do you study Buddhism at Hanazono University?
なぜ花園大学で仏教を勉強しますか。

	RSS	HUO
In order to inherit temple おてらをつために	7	31
Other (e.g., own interest)	42	39
No answer	6	4

3. Did you have any interest in Zen before enrolling at the university? 入学前に禅について興味を持っていましたか。

	RSS	HUO
Yes	21	29
No	34	45

4. Have you been ordained? 得度をしましたか。

	RSS	HUO
Yes	11	36
No	43	37
No answer	1	1

5. Have you taken the precepts? 受戒しましたか。

	RSS	HUO
Yes	3	10
No	51	60
No answer	1	4

6. Do you plan to enter a training hall after graduation?
卒業してから僧堂に入るつもりですか。

	RSS	HUO
Yes	11	40
No	42	32
No answer	2	2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources (Annotated)

Books, booklets, and articles

Abbreviations
Daikai: Dai 50 kaikinen zenkoku hōei daikai
Danshinto dokuhon: Rinzaishū danshinto dokuhon
Gendai jitei yōkun: Zendera ressun. Gendai jitei yōkun
Hakusho: Kyōka hakusho
Hanazonokai 100 nen: Hanazonokai 100 nen no ayumi
Hōyō no tebiki: Hōyō no tebiki. "Gyōji kaisetsu to kakai"
Jiin Meikan: Rinzaishū ōbakushū jiin meikan
Josei no bukkyō: Josei no bukkyō. Jitei fujin bukkyō tsūshin kōza
Josei no bukkyō kyōten shiriizu: Josei no bukkyō. Jitei fujin bukkyō tsūshin kōza: kyōten shiriizu
Jūshoku chōsa: Jūshoku no shūmuchōsa bunseki
Jūshokugaku kōza: Rinzaishū gendai jūshokugaku kōza
Kōryū hōkoku: Zensō no katorikku shūdoin seikatsu taiken. Dai sankai tōsei reisei kōryū hōkoku
Rinnō oumu: Rinnō oumu mondai kenkyūkai kenkyū hōkoku
Seishōnen: Seishōnen kyōka shidō no tebiki
Shingyō kyōten: Rinzaishū shingyō kyōten
Shūkyōbu gaido: Hanazono daigaku shūkyōbu gaido
Shūsei: *Rinzaishū myōshinjiha shūsei*
SSSMC 1991: *Sōryo hikkei*
SSSMC 1993: *Toshi danshinto no shūkyō ishiki*
SSSMC 1994: *Danshinto hikkei*
SSSMC 1995: *Sōtōshū shūsei sōgō chōsa hōkoku sho*
Tebiki: *Hanazonokai katsudō no tebiki*
Yoku wakaru myōshinji: *Yoku wakaru myōshinji. Zen no kokoro*
Zau: *Jūshoku zayū*
Zendō Guide Book: Zendō Guide Book. Life in the Rinzai Zen Hall

Butsuzen kekkonshiki no shiori 仏前結婚式のしおり
—booklet from Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Kyōka Kikaku Kankyūkai (1967) on promoting Buddhist marriages.
Dai 50 kaikinen zenkoku hōei daikai 代五十回記念全国奉永大会
—booklet from the Hanazonoryū Musō Kyōkai ceremony (Oct. 2000), containing schedule and list of participating parishes.
Danshinto hikkei 壇信徒必携
—guidebook for lay members from the Sōtō sect. (Tokyo: Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 1994, orig. published 1965).
Gendai sōji zen hyōron 現代相似禅評論
—book (Tokyo: Shūkōsha, 1933, orig. published 1917) with *kōan* answers by unknown author behind the pseudonym Hauhōō 破有法王 Today mostly known and interesting for its historical value.
Gōko hosshiki bonbaishō 江湖法式凡唄抄
—manual compiled by Hosshiki Bonbai Kankōkai (Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho, 1990) for Rinzai Zen priests with detailed prescriptions and illustrations on how to do what, where and when.

Goshinke jukaie 御親化授戒会
—booklet from the precept ceremony held at Myōshinji Oct. 2000, containing schedule and ritual texts.
Hanazono daigaku shūkyōbu gaido 花園大学宗教部ガイド
—booklet from Department of Religious Studies, Hanazono University (2000). Mainly addressed to students.
Hanazono Q & A 花園 Q & A
—guidebook from Myōshinjiha Hanazonokai Honbu (1995) addressed to Hanazonokai members. Almost identical to *Zen Q & A 100.*
Hanazonokai katsudō no tebiki 花園活動の手引き
—guidebook from Myōshinjiha Hanazonokai Honbu (1996), with examples and schedules for instructors of the Hanazonokai.
Hanazonokai 100 nen no ayumi 花園会１００年の歩み
—book from Myōshinjiha Hanazonokai Honbu (1991) on the history of the Hanazonokai celebrating its 100th anniversary, with excerpts from newspapers and sect journals.
How to Practice Zazen
—booklet in English from Institute for Zen Studies (a translation of Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho, no date) containing sutras, the ten oxherding pictures, and a lecture by Yamada Mumon.
Hōyō no tebiki. "Gyōji kaisetsu to shikai". 法要の手引き。「行事解説と司会」
—manual compiled by Rinzaishū Seinensō no Kai (臨済宗青年僧の会 1989) on ritual practices for monks and priests.
Jitei fujin nōtō 寺庭婦人ノウト
—supplement to *Rinzaishu gendai jūshokugaku kōza* for priest wives, ed. by Kōno Taitsu (Tokyo: Kokusho Kangyōkai, 1995).
Josei no bukkyō. Jitei fujin bukkyō tsūshin kōza 女性の仏教。寺庭婦人仏教通信講座
—five books for priest wives from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō on 1: outline of Buddhism (1983), 2: history (1984), 3: doctrines (1983), 4: everyday (1984), 5: improvement (1984).
Josei no bukkyō. Jitei fujin bukkyō tsūshin kōza: kyōten shiriizu 女性の仏教。寺庭婦人仏教通信講座経典シリーズ
—five books for priest wives from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō on Buddhist scriptures and mostly doctrinal questions: the Heart Sutra (1: 1985), the Kannon Sutra (2: 1985), the Rinzai sect (3: 1986), lay believers (4: 1986), and Hakuin's Song of Meditation (5: 1986).
Jūshoku hikkei 住職必携
—guidebook for priests from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1998) with encyclopedic references to texts, masters, practices.
Jūshoku no shūmuchōsa 住職の宗務調査分析
—survey from Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Kyōgakubu (2002) to priests (2,392 respondents), part-time priests (869), assistant priests (508), retired priests (370), and priest wives (2,045), on various matters related to their offices and temple life.
Jūshoku oboegaki 住職覚書
—manual from Myōshinjiha Kyōka Sentā (1995) to priests on the sect, scriptures, and religious practices.
Jūshoku zayu 住職座右
—manual from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1970) for priests, an older predecessor to *Jūshoku zayū* and *Jūshoku hikkei.*
Kenkyū hōkoku 研究報告
—from Myōshinjiha Kyōka Sentā; eight volumes (1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 2001, 2002, 2004) with research and survey results, essays and articles. Addressed to (scholar-minded) priests.

Kenshū no shiori 研修のしおり
—booklet from Myōshinjiha Hanazonokai Honbu (1995) for study groups containing scriptures, songs, and smaller texts.
Kōunji 興雲寺
—booklet from the temple Kōunji, published and handed out on the occasion of the *shinshan shiki* Nov. 2000.
Kyōka biyọ̄ 教化備要
—guidebook from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1988, for missionary teachers and priests with instructions and examples of how to arrange cultivating and missionary activities (precept ceremonies, study groups, etc.).
Kyōka hakusho 教化白書
—single volume from Myōshinjiha Kyōka Sentā (1985) with survey results, comments, descriptions of cultivation/mission methods, and illustrations. Addressed to priests and lay members.
Myōshinji hanazonoryū gakubushū 妙心寺花園流学部集
—booklet from Musō Kyōkai Honbu (2000, 1970) containing religious songs (*eika, wasan*), illustrated with notes.
Okagesama undō o susumeru tame no shiori おかげさま運動をすすめるためのしおり
—booklet by Okagesama Undō Suishin Honbu (n. d.) on the Okagesama Undō for people involved in the movement.
Rinō oumu mondai kenkyūkai kenkyū hōkoku 臨黄ウオム問題研究会研究報告
—working paper for Rinzai and Ōbaku scholar priests on the problems with the Aum Shinrikyō incident.
Rinzaishū danshinto dokuhon 臨済宗壇信徒読本
—book by Arakawa Genki (Tokyo: Sansei Shobọ̄ 1992) containing explanations of texts and ritual practices. Aimed at all believers from the Rinzai sects.
Rinzaishū gendai jūshokugaku kōza 臨済宗現代住職学講座
—book ed. by Kōno Taitsu (Tokyo: Kokusho Kangyōkai, 1995) for priests, containing essays on the teachings and practices of the Rinzai Zen sect(s), with instructive examples, Q & A's, and illustrations.
Rinzaishū myōshinjiha shūsei 臨済宗妙心寺派宗制
—the official constitution of the sect from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1997, 530 pages), in a very formal language identifying its aims, structure, and legitimation according to the Religious Corporation Law. In principle written to all members of the sect, in reality only read by a minority of the priests.
Rinzaishū nōto 臨済宗ノウト
—manual for Rinzai Zen priests compiled by Itō Kōkan et al. (Kyoto: Kichūdọ̄ 1984/1968), containing scriptures and instructions on ritual practices.
Rinzaishū ōbakushū jiin meikan 臨済宗黄檗宗寺院名鑑
—book published by Rinzaishū Ōbakushū Rengō Kakuha Gōgisho (1998) listing all the names and addresses of temples within the Rinzai and Ōbaku Zen sects.
Rinzaishū shingyō kyōteṇ 臨済宗信行教典
—book by Takenaka Gentei (Tokyo: Kamakura Shinsho, 1984)
containing descriptions and advice on the belief and practice of Rinzai sect affiliates.
Seishōnen kyōka shidō no tebiḳi 青少年教化指導の手引き
—guidebook from Myōshinjiha Hanazonokai Honbu (1988) for instructors guiding youngsters in different ages. Descriptions and examples of schedules.
Shūmon anjinshō 宗門安心章
—booklet from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1965) on the essential teachings of the sect. Addressed to the laity.
Sōryo hikkei 宗侶必携
—manual for priests from the Sōtō sect (Tokyo: Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 1991, orig. published 1952).

Sōtōshū shūsei sōgō chōsa hōkoku sho 曹洞宗宗勢総合調査報告書
—book with survey results (on the attitudes and practices of the priests) from the Sōtō sect (Tokyo: Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 1995).
Toshi danshinto no shūkyō ishiki 都市壇信徒の宗教意識
—book with survey results (on the religious attitudes of the sect members) from the Sōtō sect (Tokyo: Sōtōshū Shūmuchō, 1993).
Yoku wakaru Myōshinji. Zen no kokoro よくわかる妙心寺。禅のこころ
—booklet ed. by Hosokawa Keichi (Kyoto: Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Shūmuhonjō, 1998), containing essays on the history, teaching, and relevance of the sect.
Zaike sōgi 在家葬儀
—booklet on funerals for the laity, published by Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Kyōka Sentā Fukyōshi Dendōshitsu (1996).
Zen Mind to Mind
—booklet (in Japanese) from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (n. d.) on meditation positions for participants at the Taishū Zendō.
Zen Q and A 100
—guidebook (in Japanese) from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (1988) addressed to priest wives containing teaching, history, and practical matters.
Zen seiten 禅聖典
—book compiled by the joint Rinzai assembly Rinzaishū Rengō Kakuha Fukyōdan (1987) containing the most essential Zen Buddhist scriptures, a "Zen bible."
Zen to kuyō 禅と供養
—booklet on memorial services published by Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Kyōka Sentā (1999).
Zendera ressun. Gendai jitei yōkun 禅寺レッスン。現代寺庭要訓
—booklet with essential instructions for contemporary temple families from Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō (2001).
Zendō Guide Book. Life in the Rinzai Zen Hall
—booklet in English (written by Katō Ryūhō, trans. by T. Griffith Foulk) from Rinzaishū Myōshinjiha Shūmu Honjō containing (n.d.) explanations of the daily life in the monasteries. Given to Catholic monks when visiting Myōshinji in their exchange programs.
Zensō no katorikku shūdoin seikatsu taiken. Dai sankai tōsei reisei kōryū hōkoku 禅僧カトリック修道院生活体験
—book ed. by Hirata Seikō (Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho, 1988) on the exchange programs between Catholic and Zen Buddhist monks.

Periodicals
Hanazono 花園
—monthly magazine distributed to the temples of the sect, aimed at members of the Hanazonokai. Containing essays, comics, interviews, letters on Zen, Buddhism, and general lifestyle. Special issues are published at New Year, *higan* and *obon*. Published by the Hanazonokai Honbu.
Hanazonokaihō 花園開放
—periodical magazine for the members of the Hanazonokai. Almost the same content as in Hanazono. Published by the Hanazonokai Honbu.
Jitō sōsho 自灯叢書
—periodical magazine/booklet containing longer essays on matters related to religion and life in general. Published by the Kyōka Sentā.
Konparage コンパらゲ
—periodical magazine for the students at the Department of Religious Studies at Hanazono University, containing essays and information on Zen theory and practice.

Shōbōrin 正法輪
—monthly magazine for the priests of the sect. Containing (mainly scholastic) essays or translations, news from the institution, descriptions and announcements of ceremonies, lists of donators and priests having acquired a new rank.
The Zen
—magazine (in Japanese) from a private company, whose director is interested in Zen; contains essays written by Zen masters and priests.

Pamphlets
Daihannya-e 大般若会
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) the assembly of the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra.
Darumadera 達磨寺
—from the Darumadera (Hōrinji) on the temple and the setsubun festival.
Empukuji no shiori 円福寺のしおり
—from Empukuji on the temple and the Manninkō festival.
Hanamatsuri 花祭り
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) Buddha's birthday.
Higan-e 彼岸会
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) *higan-e*.
Jōdō-e 成道会
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) Buddha's final nirvana.
Kaisansamṇ 開山さま
—from the Kyōka Sentā on the sect founder.
Kiso reijō 木曽霊場
—from the Tourist Information in Fukushima on the Kiso pilgrimage.
Kuyō no kokoro 供養のこころ
—from the Kyōka Sentā on memorial services.
Misshōkai nyūkai no goannai 微笑会入会のご案内
—from and about the Misshōkai.
Nehan-e 涅槃会
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) Buddha's nirvana.
Oboṇ お盆
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) *obon*.
Okyō ni shitashimu お経にしたしむ
—from the Kyōka Sentā on reading and chanting sutras.
Oshōgatsu お正月
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (the celebration of) New Year.
Osōshiki お葬式
—from the Kyōka Sentā on (rituals related to) death and dying.
Tanagyō 棚行
—from the Kyōka Sentā on chanting sutras in front of the *butsudan*.
Waga uchi no bukkyō. Rinzaishū. (Waga *rinzaishū*) わが家の仏教。臨済宗
—on the Rinzai sect, addressed to lay members of all Rinzai sects.
Zazen no susume 座禅のすすめ
—from the Kyōka Sentā on *zazen*.

Secondary Sources

Abe, Rie (1996) *Zen no Tera: Rinzaishu, ōbakushu, 15 honsan to kaisan zenji*. Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho.
Agency for Cultural Affairs (1981) *Japanese Religion: A Survey*. Tokyo: Kōdansha (1972).
——. (1995) *Shūkyō nenkan*. Tokyo: Gyōsei.

——. (1996) *The Outline of Religious Corporations System in Japan*. Tokyo: Agency for Cultural Affairs.

——. (1999) *Shūkyō nenkan*. Tokyo: Gyōsei.

Akamatsu, Toshihide, and Philip Yampolsky (1977) "Muromachi Zen and the Gozan System" in John W. Hall and Toyoda Takeshi (eds.) *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, 313–29. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Akizuki, Ryōmin (1990) *New Mahayana Buddhism for a Postmodern World* (trans. by James W. Heisig and Paul L. Swanson). Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.

Alles, Gregory D. (2000) "Exchange" in William Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon (eds.), *Guide to the Study of Religion*: 110–24. London and New York: Cassell.

Aoyama, Shundo (1990) *Zen Seeds: Reflections of a Female Priest* (trans. by Patricia Daien Benage). Tokyo: Kōsei Publishing Co.

Arai, Paula Kane Robinson (1999) *Women Living Zen: Japanese Sōtō Buddhist Nuns*. Oxford University Press.

Bachnik, Jane M. (1995) "Orchestrated Reciprocity: Belief versus Practice in Japanese Funeral Ritual" in Jan Van Bremen and D. Pages Martinez (eds.) *Ceremony and Ritual in Japan: Religious Practices in an Industrialized Society*. London and New York: Routledge, 108–45.

Baroni, Helen J. (2000) *Ōbaku Zen: The Emergence of the Third Sect of Zen in Tokugawa Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Barthes, Roland (1982) *The Empire of Signs*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Bell, Catherine (1988) "Ritualization of Texts and Textualization of Ritual in the Codification of Taoist Liturgy" in *History of Religions* 27, 2: 366–92.

——. (1992) *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

——. (1997) *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Berling, Judith A. (1987) "Bringing the Buddha Down to Earth: Notes on the Emergence of Yülü as a Buddhist Genre" in *History of Religions* 21,1: 56–88.

Bernstein, Andrew (2006) *Modern Passings: Death Rites, Politics, and Social Change in Imperial Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Bharati, Agehananda (1970) "The Hindu Renaissance and its Apologetic Patterns" in *Journal of Asian Studies* 29, 267–87.

Bielefeldt, Carl (2005) "Practice" in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.) *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press: 229–44.

Bloch, Maurice (1973) "Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation" in *European Journal of Sociology* 15: 55–81.

——. (1988) "Introduction: Death and the Concept of a Person" in Cederroth, Corlin, and Lindstrom (eds.) *On the Meaning of Death: Essays on Mortuary Rituals and Eschatological Beliefs*: 11–32. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

Bodiford, William M. (1991) "Dharma Transmission in Sōtō Zen: Manzan Dōhaku's Reform Movement" in *Monumenta Nipponica* 46, 4: 423–51.

——. (1992) "Zen in the Art of Funerals: Ritual Salvation in Japanese Buddhism" in *History of Religions* 32,2: 146–64.

——. (1993) *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

——. (1994) "Sōtō Zen in a Japanese town: Field Notes on a Once Every Thirty Three Years Kannon Festival" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, 1: 3–36.

——. (1996) "Zen and the Art of Religious Prejudice: Efforts to Reform a Tradition of Social Discrimination" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23,1–2: 1–27.

Borup, Jørn (1998) *Zen: Levende japansk buddhisme*. København: Munksgaard.

——. (2004) "Zen and the Art of Inverting Orientalism: Religious Studies and Genealogical Networks" in Pages Antes, A. Geertz, and R. Warne (eds.) *New Approaches to the Study of Religion*. Berlin: Verlag de Gruyter: 451–487.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1991) *Language and Power* (ed. by John B. Thompson, trans. by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson). Cambridge: Polity Press.

——. (1994) *Raisons pratique: Sur la théorie de l'action*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

Bowring, Richard (2005) *Religious Traditions of Japan 500–1600*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Boyer, Pascal (1994) *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas. A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Buswell, Robert E. Jr. (1988) "Ch'an Hermeneutics: A Korean View" in Lopez, Donald S. Jr. (ed.) *Buddhist Hermeneutics*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press: 231–56.
——. (1992) *The Zen Monastic Experience: Buddhist Practice in Contemporary Korea*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Buswell, Robert E. Jr. (ed. in chief) (2004) *Encyclopedia of Buddhism Vols. I and II*. New York: Macmillan Reference.
Caputo, John (1997) *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
Carrithers, Michael, Steven Lukes, and Steven Collins (eds.) (1985) *Category of the Person*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Chakravarti, Uma (1987) *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Cole, Alan (1998) *Mothers and Sons in Chinese Buddhism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Collcutt, Martin (1981) *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.
Cooke, Gerald (1974) "Traditional Buddhist Sects and Modernization in Japan" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 1,4: 267–330.
Corless, Roger (1990) "How is the Study of Buddhism Possible?" in *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 2,1: 27–41.
Covell, Stephen G. (2005) *Japanese Temple Buddhism: Worldliness in a Religion of Renunciation*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Davis, Winston (1977) *Toward Modernity: A Developmental Typology of Popular Religious Affiliation in Japan*. Cornell University East Asia Papers no. 12.
——. (1992) *Japanese Religion and Society: Paradigms of Structure and Change*. New York: State University of New York Press.
Deshimaru, Taisen (1979) *The Voice of the Valley: Zen teachings*. Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merril Company Inc.
Douglas, Mary (1966) *Purity and Danger: An analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger.
Faure, Bernard (1986) "Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm" in *History of Religions* 25, 3: 187–98.
——. (1987) "The Daruma-shū, Dōgen and Sōtō Zen" in *Monumenta Nipponica* 42, 1: 25–55.
——. (1991) *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
——. (1993) *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
——. (1995a) "Quand l'habit fait le moine: The Symbolism of the Kāsāya in Sōtō Zen" in *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 8: 337–69.
——. (1995b) "The Kyoto School and Reverse Orientalism" in Charles Wei-hsun Fu and Steven Heine (eds.) *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives*: 245–82. New York: State University of New York Press.
——. (1997) *The Will to Orthodoxy: A Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
——. (1998) *The Read Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Fields, Rick (1981) *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*. Boston and London: Shambhala.
Fitzgerald, Timothy (1993) "Japanese Religion as Ritual Order" in *Religion* 23: 315–41.

——. (2000) *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Foulk, Griffith T. (1987) *The 'Ch'an School' and its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Institution*. PhD dissertation, University of Michigan.

——. (1988) "The Zen Institution in Modern Japan" in Kraft 1988: 157–77.

——. (1993) "Issues in the Field of East Asian Buddhist Studies: An Extended Review of *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, ed. Peter N. Gregory" in *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 16,1: 93–183.

——. (1993–94) "Zen and the Art of Deconstruction" in *History of Religions* 33: 287–96.

——. (2000) "The Form and Function of Koan Literature: A Historical Overview" in Heine and Wright 2000: 15–45.

Freiberger, Oliver (2000) "Profiling the Sangha: Institutional and Non-Institutional Tendencies in Early Buddhist Teachings" in *Marburg Journal of Religion*, vol. 5, 1. (Also available at www.unimarburg.de/religionswissenschaft/journal/mjr/freiberger.html.)

Frischkorn, Thomas (1990) *"Zazen" für die Arbeitsnehmer? Zur Symptomatologie zen-buddhistischer Rituale in Japans Wirtschaft*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Gellner, David (1992) *Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest: Newar Buddhism and its Hierarchy of Ritual*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gernet, Jacques (1995) *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries* (trans. by F. Verellen). New York: Columbia University Press.

Goble, Andrew (1989) "Truth, Contradiction and Harmony in Medieval Japan: Emperor Hanazono (1297–1348) and Buddhism" in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 12, 1: 2163.

——. (1995) "Social Change, Knowledge, and History: Hanazono's Admonitions to The Crown Prince" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55, 1: 61–128.

Gombrich, Richard (1971) *Precept and Practice: Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

——. (1988) *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. London and New York: Routledge.

Gregory, Peter (1988) "What Happened to the 'Perfect Teaching'? Another Look at Hua-yen Buddhist Hermeneutics" in Lopez 1988: 207–30.

Gross, Lawrence William (1998) *Manzan Dōhaku and the Transmission of the Teaching*. PhD dissertation, Stanford University.

Hakamaya, Noriaki (1997) "Scholarship as Criticism" in Hubbard and Swanson 1997: 113–14.

Hardacre, Helen (1984) *Lay Buddhism in Contemporary Japan: Reiyūkai Kyōdan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——. (1997) *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan*. University of California Press.

Harvey, Peter (1990) *An Introduction to Buddhism. Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heine, Steven (1997) "Critical Buddhism and Dogen's *Shobōgenzō*: The Debate Over the 75-Fascicle and 12-Fascicle Texts" in Hubbard and Swanson 1997: 251–87.

——. (1999) *Shifting Shape Shifting Text: Philosophy and Folklore in the Fox Tradition*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Heine, Steven and Dale S. Wright (2000) *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heisig, James and John C. Maraldo (eds.) (1994) *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School and the Question of Nationalism*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Hendry, Joy (1995) *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation, and Power in Japan and Other Societies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hirata Seikō (1967) "Samu, Takuhatsu" in Nishitani 1967.

Hisamatsu, Shin´ichi (1979) "The Fundamental Kōan" (trans. Christopher Ives) in *FAS Society Newsletter 3*.

——. (1985) "Memories of My Academic Life" (trans. Christopher Ives) in Eastern Buddhist 18, 1: 8–27.

——. (1990–91) "Talks on the Vimalakirti Sutra" (trans. Takahashi Nobumichi) in *FAS Society Journal*, 12–16.

Hoffmann, Yoel (1978) *The Sound of One Hand: 281 Zen Koans with Answers*. New York: Basic Books.

Hori, Ichiro (1968) *Folk Religion in Japan: Continuity and Change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hori, Victor Sōgen (1994) "Teaching and Learning in the Rinzai Zen Monastery" in *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 20, 1: 5–36.

——. (1999) "Translating the *Zen Phrase Book*" in *Nanzan Bulletin* 23: 44–58.

——. (2003) *Zen Sand: The Book of Capping Phrases for Koan Practice*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Horii, Mitsutoshi (2006) "Deprofessionalisation of Buddhist Priests in Contemporary Japan. A Socio-Industrial Study of Religious Profession" in *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, article 2.

Hubbard, Jamie and Paul L. Swanson (eds.) (1997) *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm Over Critical Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Humphrey, Caroline and James Laidlaw (1994) *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual: A Theory of Ritual*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Humphreys, Christmas (1978) *Both Sides of the Circle. The Autobiography of Christmas Humphreys*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

Ikeda, Eishun (1998) "Teaching Assemblies and Lay Societies in the Formation of Modern Sectarian Buddhism" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25, 1–2; 11–44.

Inagaki, Hisao (1988) *A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo.

Ishii, Kenji (1997a) *Deeta bukku. Gendai nihonjin no shūkyō*. Tokyo: Shinyōsha.

——. (1997b) "Annual Events and the Transformation of Japanese Religious Life" (www.kokugakuin.ac.jp/ijcc/wp/cpjr/folkbeliefs/ishii.html) (orig. published as "Nenchū gyōji ni miru nihonjin no shūkyō seikatsu no henyō" in Wakimoto Tsuneya and Yanagawa Keiichi (eds.) *Matsuri e no manazashi*. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai (1992).

Jaffe, Richard (2001) *Neither Monk nor Layman: Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary (1965) Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha.

Katō, Shōshun (1998) "'A Lineage of Dullards': Zen Master Jōjū Reisō and his Associates" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25, 1–2; 151–65.

Kennett, Jiyu (1972) *Selling Water by the River: A Manual of Zen Training*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Kenney, Elizabeth (1996/97) "Shinto Mortuary Rites in Contemporary Japan" in *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 9, 397–436.

Kenney, Elizabeth, and Edmund T. Gilday (2000) "Editor's Introduction" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 27, 3–4. *Special Issue: Mortuary Rites in Japan*: 163–78.

Ketelaar, James Edward (1990) *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kiba, Akeshi (1996) "Tradition and Reform in Modern Japanese Buddhism" in *Zen Buddhism Today. Annual Report of the Kyoto Zen Symposium*, 13: 27–38.

Kieschnick, John (2003) *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Kimura, Jōyū (1984) *Myōshinji: 650 nen no ayumi*. Kyoto: Myōshinji Daihōkai Jimukyoku.

King, Richard (1999) *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and "The Mystic East."* London and New York: Routledge.

Kinnard, Jacob N. (1999) *Imaging Wisdom: Seeing and Knowing in the Art of Indian Buddhism*. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Kirchner, Thomas (1996) "Modernity and Rinzai Zen: Doctrinal Change or Continuity?" in *Zen Buddhism Today. Annual Report of the Kyoto Zen Symposium* 13: 39–54.

Kirita, Kiyohede (1996) "Young D. T. Suzuki's Views on Society" in *The Eastern Buddhist* 29, 1: 109–33.

Kisala, Robert (1997) "Reactions to Aum: The Revision of the Religious Corporations Law" in *Japanese Religions* 22, 1: 60–74.

——. (1999) "Asian Values Study" in *Nanzan Bulletin* 23: 59–73.

Kraft, Kenneth (ed.) (1988) *Zen: Tradition and Transition*. New York: Grove Press.

——. 1992 *Eloquent Zen: Daito and Early Japanese Zen*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Kumamoto, Einin (2004) "Shut Up, Priest: A Review of Minami Jikisai's The Zen Priest Speaks and Other Works" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31, 2: 465–87.

LaFleur, William R. (1992) *Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lai, Whalen (1979) "Ch'an metaphors: Waves, water, mirror, lamp" in *Philosophy East and West* 29, 3: 243–53.

LoBreglio, John (1997) "Revisions to the Religious Corporation Law: An Introduction and Annotated Translation" in *Japanese Religions* 22, 1: 38–59.

Lopez, Donald S. Jr. (ed.) (1995) *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*. Chicago: University of Chicago University Press.

——. (1996) *Elaborations on Emptiness: Uses of the Heart Sutra*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——. (2005) (ed.) *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Makino, Yasuko (2006) "Japanese Reference Works, Sources and Libraries" in Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson (eds.) *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Marcure, Kenneth A. (1985) "The *Danka* System" in *Monumenta Nipponica* 40, 1: 39–67.

Matsunaga, Alicia (1967) "The Land of Natural Affirmation: Pre-Buddhist Japan" in *Monumenta Nipponica* 21, 1–2: 203–9.

McFarland, Neil H. (1987) *Daruma: The Founder of Zen in Japanese Art and Popular Culture*. Tokyo and New York: Kōdansha International.

McMullin, Neil (1984) *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

McRae, John R. (1986) *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

——. (2004) *Seeing through Zen: Encounter, Genealogy, and Transformation in Chinese Chan Buddhism.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Miller, Mara (1997) "Views of Japanese Selfhood: Japanese and Western Perspectives" in Douglas Allen (ed.) *Culture and Self: Philosophical and Religious Perspectives, East and West*: 145–62. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Ministry of Education (Japan) (1951) *Religious Juridical Persons Law* (Law no. 126, April 3, 1951).

Miura, Isshu and Ruth Fuller Sasaki (1966) *Zen Dust: The History of the Koan and Koan Study in Rinzai (Lin- chi) Zen. With Background Notes, Descriptive Bibliography, Genealogical Charts, Maps, Indexes, and Reproductions of Drawings by Hakuin.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Miura, Kiyohiro (1988) *He's Leaving Hom: My Young Son Becomes a Zen Monk* (ed. Jeff Shore). Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Publishing.

Mohr, Michel (1993) "'Experience' in the light of Zen Buddhism" in *Zen Buddhism Today. Annual Report of the Kyoto Zen Symposium* 10: 12–31.

——. (1994) "Zen Buddhism during the Tokugawa Period: The Challenge to Go Beyond Sectarian Consciousness" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21: 341–72.

——. (2000) "Emerging from Non-duality: Kōan Practice in the Rinzai Tradition since Hakuin" in Heine and Wright 2000: 244–79.

Morinaga, Sōkō (1985) *Pointers to Insight: The Life of a Zen Monk* (trans. by James Stroke) London: Zen Centre.

Mullins, Mark R. (1993) "Introduction to Part 2: Religion and the State" in Mark R. Mullins, Shimazono Susumu, and Paul L Swanson (eds.) *Religion and Society in Modern Japan:* 75–80. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.

Nishimura, Eshin (1974) "The Meaning of Zen Practice" in *Japanese Religions* 8, 3–17.

——. (1983) *Taishū zen no jidai*. Osaka: Tōhō Shuppan.

——. (1987) *Zenrin shugyōron*. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

——. (1993) *Zenrin shōkisen shōshaku*. Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho.

Nishimura, Keishin and Nara Kōmei (eds.) (1979) *Nihon bukkyō kiso kōza dai rokkan: zenshū*. Tokyo: Yūzankaku.

Norbeck, Edward (1970) *Religion and Society in Modern Japan: Continuity and Change*. Houston: William Marsh Rice University.

Numrich, Paul David (2003) "Two Buddhisms Further Considered" in *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 4, no. 1: 55–78.

Odin, Steve (1996) *The Social Self in Zen and American Pragmatism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ohnuki-Tierney, Emiko (1987) *The Monkey as Mirror: Symbolic Transformations in Japanese History and Ritual*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ohnuma, Reiko (2005) "Gift" in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.) *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*: 103–23. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Ooms, Herman (1976) "A Structural Analysis of Japanese Ancestral Rites and Beliefs" in William H. Newell (ed.) *Ancestors*: 61–90. The Hague: Mouton.

Ortner, Sherry (1989) *High Religion: A Cultural and Political History of Sherpa Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ozeki Sōen (1981) *Shinde ikiyo*. Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten.

Pye, Michael (1986) "Japanese festivals" in Alan Brown (ed.) *Festivals in World Religions*: 150–69. London and New York: Longman.

Rappaport, Roy A. (1999) *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reader, Ian (1985) "Transformations and Changes in the Teachings of the Sōtō Zen Buddhist Sect" in *Japanese Religions* 14, 1: 28–48.

——. (1986) "Zazenless Zen? The Position of Zazen in Institutional Zen Buddhism" in *Japanese Religions* 14, 3: 7–27.

——. (1988) "Miniaturization and Proliferation: a Study of Small-Scale Pilgrimage in Japan" in *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions* 1, 1: 50–66.

——. (1989) "Images in Sōtō Zen: Buddhism as a Religion of the Family in Contemporary Japan" in *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* 10, 1: 1–22.

——. (1991) *Religion in Contemporary Japan*. London: Macmillan Press.

——. (1995) "Cleaning Floors and Sweeping the Mind: Cleaning as a Ritual Process" in Van Bremen, Jan and D. Pages Martinez (eds.) *Ceremony and Ritual in Japan: Religious Practices in an Industrialized Society*: 227–45. London and New York: Routledge.

——. (1999) "Contemporary Zen Buddhist Tracts for the Laity: Grassroots Buddhism in Japan" in Tanabe 1999: 487–98.

Reader, Ian and George J. Tanabe Jr. (1998) *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Repp, Martin (1995) "The Earthquakes in the Kobe-Osaka Area 17th 1995: Its Impact on Religions and their Response" in *Japanese Religions* 20, 2: 207–29.

Rohlen, Thomas Pages (1973) "'Spiritual Education' in a Japanese Bank" in *American Anthropologist* 75: 1542–62.
Roth, Martin and John Stevens (1985) *Zen Guide: Where to Meditate in Japan*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill.
Rowe, Mark (2000) "Stickers for Nails: The Ongoing Transformation of Roles, Rites and Symbolism in Japanese Funerals" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 27, 3–4: 353–78.
——. (2004) "Where the Action Is: Sites of contemporary Sōtō Buddhism" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31/2: 357–88.
Ruppert, Brian O. (2006) "Using Archives in the Study of Japanese Religions" in Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson (eds.) *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Sahlins, Marshall (1972) *Stone Age Economics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Sasaki, Ruth Fuller (trans.) (1975) *The Recorded Sayings of Ch'an Master Lin-chi Hui-chao of Chen Prefecture*. Kyoto: The Institute for Zen Studies.
Satō Giei (1982) *Unsui nikki-e de miru zen no shugyō seikatsu*. Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho.
Satō Giei, Eshin Nishimura, and Bardwell L. Smith (1973) *Unsui: A Diary of Zen Monastic Life*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Satō Kōji (1972) *The Zen Life*. (Photos by Sosei Kuzunishi, trans. by Ryojun Victoria.) New York: Weatherhill.
Sawada, Janine Anderson (1998) "Political Waves in the Zen Sea: The Engaku-ji Circle in Early Meiji Japan" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25, 1–2: 117–50.
Schnell, Scott (2006) "Conducting Fieldwork on Japanese Religions" in Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson (eds.) *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Seo, Audrey Yoshiko and Stephen Addiss (1998) *The Art of Twentieth-Century Zen Paintings and Calligraphy by Japanese Masters*. Boston: Shambhala Publications.
Sharf, Robert H. (1992) "The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Ch'an Masters in Medieval China" in *History of Religions* 32: 1–31.
——. (1993) "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism" in *History of Religions* 33, 1: 1–43.
——. (1995) "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22, 3–4: 417–58.
——. (1995b) "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience" in *Numen* 42: 228–83.
——. (2005) "Ritual" in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.) *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*: 245–70. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
Shimada, Hiromi (1986) "Yanagawa Keiichi and Community Religion" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 13, 2–3: 211–26.
Shore, Jeff (1986–87) "An Interview with Ryomin Akizuki" in *FAS Society Journal*, 11–20.
Smith, Robert J. (1974) *Ancestor Worship in Contemporary Japan*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
Smyers, Karen A. (1999) *The Fox and the Jewel: Shared and Private Meanings in Contemporary Japanese Inari Worship*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Snodgrass, Judith (2003) Presenting *Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
Southwold, Martin (1983) *Buddhism in Life: The Anthropological Study of Religion and the Sinhalese Practice of Buddhism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Spiro, Melford (1982) *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press (1970).
Sponberg, Alan (1986) "Meditation in Fa-hsiang Buddhism" in Peter N. Gregory (ed.), *Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism*: 15–43. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Stephenson, Barry (2005) "The Kōan as Ritual Performance" in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* vol. 73, 2: 475–96.
Stevens, John (1988) *The Marathon Monks of Mount Hiei.* Boston: Shambhala.
Storandt, Priscilla Daichi (2003) "Zen o motomeru gaikokujin shuōshatachi" in *Zen* 189: 34–39.
Suzuki, D. T. (1933) "Notes" in *The Eastern Buddhist* 6, 2: 192–96.
——. (1953) "A Reply to Hu Shih" in *Philosophy East and West* 3,1: 25–46.
Suzuki, Hikaru (2000) *The Price of Death: The Funeral Industry in Contemporary Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Tagami, Taishu (1986) "The Internationalization of Zen: Problems and Perspectives" in *Zen Buddhism Today* 4, 72–80.
Takahashi, Yūon and Nagato Gimyō (1984) *Katatsumori no uta. Zendō tsurezure monogatari*. Kyoto: Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho.
Takenuki, Genshō (1992) *Nihon Zenshushi*. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan (1989).
——. (1994) "Rinzaishū, Ōbakushū" in Tanaka Ryōshō (ed.) *Zengaku kenkyū nyūmon* Tokyo: Daitō Shuppan, 1994: 249–71.
Tamamura, Takeji (1991) *Rinzaishūshi*. Tokyo: Shunjūsha.
Tambiah, Stanley J. (1968) "The Magical Power of Words" in *Man* 3: 175–208.
——. (1970) *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in Northeast Thailand*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
——. (1976) *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
——. (1979) "A Performative Approach to Ritual" in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65: 113–69.
Tanabe, George J. Jr. (ed.) (1999) *Religions of Japan in Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
——. (2004) "Popular Buddhist Orthodoxy in Contemporary Japan" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31/2: 289–310.
Thelle, Notto (1987) *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan: From Conflict to Dialogue, 1854–1899.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Todd, Lewis T. (1993) "Contributions to the Study of Popular Buddhism: The Newar Buddhist Festival of Gumlā Dharma" in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 16, 2: 309–54.
Tsuchida, Hiromi, Kikuchi Tota, Yano Tatehiko, and Sugimata Yasushi (eds.) (1988) *Zen no shiki: Shugyō no seikatsu to bunka*. Tokyo: Kōsei Shuppan.
Tsunoda, Ryusaku, William Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene (eds.) (1958) *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press.
Tucker, Mary Evelyn (1999) "Kaibara Ekken's Precepts on the Family" in Tanabe 1999: 38–52.
Turner, Victor (1989) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Cornell University Press (1969).
Uchino, Kumiko (1983) "The Status Elevation Process of Sōtō Sect Nuns in Modern Japan" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 10, 2–3: 177–94.
Van Bragt, Jan (2000) "Interreligious Dialogue and Evangelization" in *Japanese Religions* 25, 1–2: 121–33.
Van Gennep, Arnold (1960) *The Rites of Passage*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Victoria, Brian (1997) *Zen at War*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill.
Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism, 1900–1950.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Welter, Albert (2000) "Silent Transmission and the Kung-an (Kōan) Tradition" in Heine and Wright 2000: 75–109.
Williams, Duncan R. (2005) *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Wright, Dale (1992) "Historical Understanding: The Ch'an Buddhist Transmission Narratives and Modern Historiography" in *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History*, 31, 1: 37–46.
Yamada, Mumon (2004) *Lectures on Ten Oxherding Pictures* (foreword by Priscilla Daichi Storandt, trans. by Victor Sogen Hori). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Yamada, Shoji (2001) "The Myth of Zen in the Art of Archery" in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28, 1–2: 1–30.
Yampolsky, Philip B. (trans.) (1971) *The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings*. New York: Columbia University Press.
——. (1988) "The Development of Japanese Zen" in Kraft 1988, 140–56.
Yanagida, Seizan (1981) *Daruma*. Tokyo: Kōdansha.
Yokoi, Yūhō and Daisen Victoria (1987) *Zen Master Dōgen: An Introduction with Selected Writings*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill.
Yoritomi, Motohiro and Shiraki Toshiyuki (1993) *Kansai goriyaku no jisha*. Osaka: Toki Shobō.
Zengaku Daijiten (1985) (Compiled by Komazawa Daigakunai Zengaku Daijiten Hensansho.) Tokyo: Taishukan Shoten (1977).
Zürn, Peter (1987) *Japan Zwischen Yen und Zen*. Landsberg: Moderne Industrie.

Web addresses

www.10.ocn.ne.jp/~mk123456/mino.htm
http://web-japan.org/trends/lifestyle/lif030624.html
www.bpf.org/tsangha/tomatsusec (seen in 2002)
www.bunka.go.jp/english/pdf/chapter_10.pdf
www.darumanetjapan.com
www.hanazono.ac.jp/english/e_univer/index.html
www.ichibata.org/gaiyou.htm
www.iijnet.or.jp/iriz/irizhtml/refworks/appref.htm
www.jinguuji.or.jp/mugen/mugen.htm
www.josei.com/bwo/
www.kannon-in.or.jp/
www.kyohaku.go.jp/tokuten/jakuchu/hp9–85e.htm (seen in 2004)
www.myoshin.com/
www.ningenzen.org/lay.html
www.otera.net/zen.htm
www.thezen.or.jp/ (seen in 2002)
www.zazen.or.jp
http://zen.rinnou.net
www.zenbunka.or.jp

INDEX

Akizuki Ryōmin 94
alms-begging, see takuhatsu
ama 76 ff
ango-e 59, 140
anjin 127

belief 123 ff
Bodhidharma 11, 85
butsudan 189 ff, 261

calendrical rituals 216 ff
categories of religious practice 105 ff
Chan 9, 205
clergy, see sōryō
confraternity, see kō
Critical Buddhism 94, 196

dana, see fuse
danka (seido) 19, 41, 81 ff, 148, 157
danshinto 80
Daruma 234 ff
death and death rituals 41, 183 ff, 254 ff
dōjō 35

economy 39 ff
eika (kai) 151
Empukuji 239

FAS 91 ff
festivals 324 ff
folk 114, 234, 243
foreigners 96 ff
fujinkai 150 ff
fukyō 135
funeral Buddhism 67, 157, 255, 271, 272
fuse 42, 117, 169

gakuto 74 ff
genze riyaku 36, 114 ff
giving, see fuse
gō 119
goeika(kai), see eika
gozan 18
gyōji 130

Hakuin Ekaku 11, 20, 163, 165
Hanazono 14, 34, 44
Hanazonokai 14, 27, 46, 88, 146 ff
Hisamatsu Shin'ichi 91 ff
hōkai 56 ff
hōkei 12
hondō 35
honmatsu seido 18, 32
honzan 13, 32, 33
hōrui 12
householder, see zaike

inka shōmei 10, 13, 199

jihan 37
ji-in 35
jizoku 70 ff
jūkai-e 246 ff
junsui zen 23, 24, 271
jūshoku 62 ff

kaidō shiki 177 ff
kaimyō 259
kanchō 25, 60
Kanzan Egen 11, 15
kechimyaku 10, 228, 229
kenshūkai 141
kō 86 ff, 239
kōan 164 ff
kudoku 117
kuyō 188, 261, 270
kyōka 106, 134 ff, 273 ff
Kyōka Sentā 46, 106, 145

lay ordination, see jūkai-e
lay Zen 26 ff, 90, 91, 93, 94

Manninkō 239
matsuji 17, 33
meditation, see zazen
Meiji 20
mission, see fukyō
modernization 20, 90, 95, 266 ff
monastic practice 159 ff
Musō Kyōkai 152 ff

nirvana 110

Okagesama Undō 153
on 121
ordination, see tokudo shiki

patriarchs 9, 226
pilgrimage 222 ff
plural Zen 277
priest wife, see jizoku
priest, see jūshoku
Protestant Buddhism, Protestant Zen 90, 196, 276

rank, see hōkai
reihai 186
religious education, see kyōka
Rinzai 3, 8, 11, 13, 17, 23, 156, 165, 206
ritual, ritualization 101 ff, 129 ff, 163, 286 ff
rituals of passage 106, 174 ff, 246 ff
rōshi 58

satori 110
seasonal rituals 217 ff
sectarian rituals 224 ff
seven halls 17, 33
shakyōkai 207 ff
shike 60
shinsan shiki 179 ff
Shōbōzan Myōshinji 9
shugyō 130, 213
shukke 4, 49 ff, 64 ff, 175, 216, 252, 282 ff
shukyō hōjinhō 30
shūsei 31
sodai 69
sōdō 34, 54, 57, 130, 159, 161
sōryō 54 ff
spiritualization 158, 215
Suzuki effect 2
Suzuki, D. T. 24, 90

tacchū 17, 33
taishū 26 ff, 81
takuhatsu 168 ff
temple (tera) 33 ff
temple son, see gakuto
texts 195 ff
tokudo shiki 175 ff, 184
transmission 9

umbrella Zen 278 ff
unsui 53, 130

worship 186 ff

Yamada Mumon 44, 51, 61, 192

zaike 6, 26, 49 ff, 79 ff
zazen, zazenkai 111, 205 ff
Zen Bunka Kenkyūsho 44
zen juku 46, 93, 138, 139
zenshū 8, 130, 157