

Heresy and Freedom of Inquiry in Interpreting the Pure Land: An Introduction to Kaneko Daiei's "My Shin Buddhist Studies"

MURAYAMA YASUSHI

KANEKO DAIEI 金子大栄 (1881–1976) was an influential and innovative Shin 真 Buddhist scholar and a follower of Kiyozawa Manshi 清沢満之 (1863–1903). Kaneko lived a long life, from the Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912) until well into the Shōwa 昭和 period (1926–1989). The 1920s was a turbulent decade for the Higashi Honganji 東本願寺 branch of Shin Buddhism. The leading priests and intellectuals debated fundamental questions regarding the existence of the Pure Land and the nature of human knowledge and faith. In 1928, this debate played out for a national audience in the pages of *Chūgai nippō* 中外日報, a newspaper focused on topics related to religious organizations. In this article, I present summaries of, and some additional commentary and background about, a series of articles by Kaneko entitled “Watashi no Shinshūgaku” 私の真宗学 (hereafter, “My Shin Buddhist Studies”), which were written in response to criticisms of his interpretations of the nature of the Pure Land presented in works published in the previous years, such as *Jōdo no kannen* 浄土の観念 (hereafter, *The Idea of the Pure Land*; 1925) and *Shinshū ni okeru nyorai oyobi jōdo no kannen* 真宗に於ける如来及浄土の観念 (hereafter, *The Idea of the Tathāgata and the*

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Pure Land in Shin Buddhism; 1926). I also discuss his critics and some other sources that help to clarify the stakes of the debate.

As is well known, Kiyozawa used philosophical terms to interpret Pure Land Buddhism. During the early modern period, the Pure Land was, on the one hand, the subject of exegetical research by scholars and, on the other hand, the object of belief for sincere practitioners. It is often said that Kiyozawa made Pure Land thought an accessible object of study for generally well-educated people who were unfamiliar with Buddhist terminology. Kaneko, along with Soga Ryōjin 曾我量深 (1875–1971), who was also a student of Kiyozawa, inherited Kiyozawa's intellectual orientation. In using Western philosophical terminology to interpret the Pure Land teachings, Kiyozawa's work generally developed terminology to describe the finite and the subjective element in Shin thought, using terms such as self (*jiko* 自己) and spirit (*seishin* 精神). In addition, Soga, by employing terminology from the Buddhist Consciousness-Only tradition, developed a unique vocabulary to discuss the infinite as the object of faith—speaking of Dharmākara Bodhisattva (i.e., Amida 阿弥陀 Buddha before becoming a buddha) as “a savior on earth.”¹ The unique role that Kaneko played in this process of reexpression is characterized by his development of a terminology that described the Pure Land as an ideal space where the infinite and the finite interact. His teacher Kiyozawa remained silent (or suspended judgment) about the issue of the Pure Land, saying that he could make no comment on that topic because he had not yet “experienced” (*jikken* 実験) the Pure Land. In this process of reinterpretation, it is possible to say that on the whole Kiyozawa was strongly influenced by Hegel's vocabulary, whereas Kaneko was more strongly influenced by Kant's terminology.

In terms of “modernizing” Pure Land Buddhism, Kiyozawa placed Pure Land thought in dialogue with the Western philosophy that had been introduced into Japan from the end of the Edo 江戸 period (1603–1868) through the Meiji period. At the same time, Kiyozawa situated Pure Land Buddhism within the whole of Buddhism. In particular, his *Seishinshugi* 精神主義 (“Spiritualism” is an inadequate translation) was an attempt to make faith an entirely interior matter while confronting, albeit obliquely, the problems of capitalist society.

The word “modernization” has many meanings. One understanding of it in the context of Japan sees it as the process of historical change through which preexisting ideas were reinterpreted in light of Western thought, which arrived piecemeal throughout the Edo period. These Western-inflected interpretations gained a significant number of new supporters and subsequently became broadly influential (whether in harmony with, or in opposition to, the progress of capitalist society). If “modernization” is understood as this process of popularization, then Kaneko can be said to have supple-

¹ See SRS 2: 408–21; Blum and Rhodes 2011, pp. 107–18.

mented Kiyozawa’s project of modernization. Nonetheless, Kaneko modernized Pure Land thought from a different perspective than that of Kiyozawa.

The purpose of this article is to provide some insight into the content of Kaneko’s thought from the end of the Taishō 大正 period (1912–1926) to the beginning of the Shōwa period for an English-reading audience, as well as to introduce the content of some of the controversy that arose surrounding it, with the broader aim of providing a fuller picture of the development of modern Pure Land thought after Kiyozawa Manshi.

KANEKO’S “MY SHIN BUDDHIST STUDIES”: FROM MEIJI TO SHŌWA

Below I will discuss the contents of “My Shin Buddhist Studies” and the circumstances related to its production. First, I would like to give an overview of Kaneko’s career from the Meiji era through the early years of the Shōwa era insofar as it is useful for understanding “My Shin Buddhist Studies.” Kaneko’s life as a student of Shin Buddhism began in Kyoto in September 1899, when he enrolled in the preparatory course at Shinshū 真宗 University in Kyoto. This institution has its roots in a seminary for the education of priests that was established at Shōsei-en 渉成園, an annex of Higashi Honganji, in 1665. In 1755, the seminary was moved a few hundred meters to the north, to the corner of Takakura 高倉 and Uodana 魚棚 streets and renamed the Takakura Academy, where it flourished as an institution for doctrinal research and ministerial education through to the early decades of the Meiji period. In response to the need to provide general education in addition to specialized training for priests that arose with the Meiji-period reforms of the educational system throughout the country, the seminary (which had been renamed as the Great Shinshū Takakura Academy in 1882) was divided into two separate entities, Shinshū Takakura Academy and Shinshū University.

The year Kaneko matriculated into the university’s primary course (1901), it had been relocated to Sugamo 巣鴨, Tokyo, at the urging of Kiyozawa, who hoped to eliminate the ambiguity that resulted from having two distinct educational institutions located in the same facility in Kyoto. In 1899, Kiyozawa moved from Saihōji 西方寺 in Ōhama 大浜, Aichi Prefecture, to Tokyo to prepare for the opening of the university and to take up his position as university president. Kiyozawa also took over a dormitory in Hongō 本郷 that was owned by Chikazumi Jōkan 近角常観 (1870–1941), who was traveling in Europe and the United States under the sponsorship of Higashi Honganji in order to investigate Western religious systems. There, Kiyozawa opened Kōkōdō 浩々洞 (Capacious Cave), a religious community, along with his students Sasaki Gesshō 佐々木月樵 (1875–1926), Tada Kanae 多田鼎 (1875–1937), and Akegarasu Haya 暁烏敏 (1877–1954).

In January 1901, the journal *Seishinkai* 精神界 (The Realm of the Spirit) began publication under the direction of the members of Kōkōdō, who advocated in its pages a new movement that they referred to as “Seishinshugi.” The journal was widely influential in intellectual circles, and became known to students studying at the various institutions of higher learning at the time. Kaneko was no exception. He read *Seishinkai* from the time of its initial publication, while he was still a student in the preparatory course. In February 1903, when Kaneko was enrolled in the primary course, he published his “Sanshu no gedatsu” 三種の解脱 (Three Types of Liberation) in *Seishinkai* (vol. 3, no. 2), which was his first article to appear in its pages. However, it was only after graduating from Shinshū University and returning home to Niigata that Kaneko began to contribute regularly to *Seishinkai* and develop a full-fledged relationship with the Kōkōdō. During this period, Shinshū University was moved back to Kyoto and remerged with the Takakura Academy, reopening under the new name Shinshū Ōtani 真宗大谷 University in 1911. Kaneko’s contributions to *Seishinkai* attracted the attention of Kōkōdō members, and in 1914 he participated in a gathering of members from around the country, where plans for the future of the movement were discussed. By that time, he had also begun to write his first book, *Shinshū no kyōgi oyobi sono rekishi* 真宗の教義及其歴史 (hereafter, *The Teachings and History of Shin Buddhism*; 1915). The manuscript was reviewed by Tada and Soga, who were already active members of the Kōkōdō community, and was published by Mugasanbō 無我山房, a publisher with close ties to the Kōkōdō group.

In light of the positive evaluation of his work by the leading members of the group, in May 1915 Kaneko was appointed to serve as the editor-in-chief of *Seishinkai* and took up residence at the Kōkōdō. The fact that Kaneko, a countryside priest with no graduate degree, had become the editor-in-chief of *Seishinkai*, a journal that was receiving a great deal of attention in Tokyo at the time, must have seemed like a “major promotion”² to most people. However, there were other factors within the Kōkōdō community that led to Kaneko’s appointment. Sasaki had become a professor at Otani University, and from 1912 he worked mainly at the university in Kyoto, with little time to devote to producing *Seishinkai*. Tada and Akegarasu had come into ideological conflict with some members of the next generation of Kōkōdō members, including Fujiwara Tetsujō 藤原鉄乘 (1879–1975) and Kiba Ryōhon 木場了本 (1885–1940). Akegarasu had created a big commotion when he staked out an extreme position on “grace” (*onchō* 恩寵), arguing that “even our transgressions and evil are the gifts of the Tathāgata.”³ To some

² Kikumura 1975, p. 36.

³ Akegarasu writes: “My saying that even our transgressions and evil are also the gift of the Tathāgata is a comment on the content of Professor Kiyozawa’s *My Faith*” (Akegarasu 1976, p. 500). And, “My Seishinshugi is the path for murderers, traitors, and thieves to find solace together with the wise and virtuous” (Akegarasu 1976, p. 243).

extent, this was an amplification of Kiyozawa’s own insistence on the crucial importance of other power (*tariki* 他力), exemplified by his statement that the “infinitely compassionate Tathāgata”⁴ takes entire responsibility for the finite individual. Akegarasu also came into conflict with the publishing house that printed *Seishinkai*, and he was forced to step down from his position as head of the group. In addition, after reports of an extramarital affair were published in the *Chūgai nippō*, he had to leave the Kōkōdō group altogether. At the same time, the situation at Tada’s home temple made it difficult for him to devote time to editing the magazine. Furthermore, Tada began to have doubts about whether the religion of other power could be academically proven and was starting to think that Kiyozawa’s Seishinshugi diverged from the thought of Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262). He wrote, “Ten years after the loss of my teacher [Kiyozawa], after an unexpected turn of events, I came to feel that my teacher’s Seishinshugi did not perfectly match with the true teaching of the Buddha and the patriarchs.”⁵ By the time Kaneko became editor, three important figures—Sasaki, Akegarasu, and Tada—had already lost their enthusiasm for the Kōkōdō. Various final decisions about the dissolution of Kōkōdō and the discontinuation of *Seishinkai* were left to Sekine Ninnō 関根仁応 (1868–1943). It was Sekine who asked Kaneko to become chief editor.

In April 1916, Kaneko was invited to be a lecturer at Toyo University, which had originally been established as the Tetsugakukan 哲学館 (Philosophy Academy) by Inoue Enryō 井上円了 (1858–1919), after he had, like Kiyozawa, studied in the philosophy department at Tokyo University with a scholarship from Higashi Honganji. Kaneko taught a course focused on *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論 (Jp. *Daijō kishin ron*; Awakening of Mahayana Faith). Kaneko said that he would never forget that his students pointed out that his interpretation of the text was different from that of Murakami Senshō 村上專精 (1851–1929),⁶ who had taught at Toyo University and had become a professor at Tokyo University in 1917. Perhaps one reason that the students’ comment became “unforgettable” for Kaneko was the fact that ultimately a conflict arose between Murakami and Kaneko over how to interpret Pure Land thought. It was not only the members of the Kōkōdō who noticed Kaneko’s academic talent—so did the teachers and students at Shinshū Otani University. Kaneko was welcomed as a professor at the university in September 1916.

In 1919, Shinshū Otani University began to seek accreditation as a university under the University Ordinance (*Daigaku rei* 大学令)—new government regulations on the purpose and organizational structure concerning the various types of universities. It

⁴ KMZI 6: 164.

⁵ Tada 1977, p. 408.

⁶ Kikumura 1975, p. 52.

was ultimately relaunched as a private Buddhist university (named Otani University) in accordance with the University Ordinance. We should remember that this newly accredited university had also been described as “a religious school” that was “devoted to the study of Shin Buddhism” by Kiyozawa when he served as its first president in his address at the Shinshū University relocation opening ceremony in 1901.⁷

As a government recognized, yet still Shin Buddhist, university, Otani University needed to demonstrate that Shin Buddhist studies could meet serious academic standards. In October 1922, Kaneko gave a series of public lectures on the potential for Shin Buddhist studies. He was in a sense serving as a representative of the university in its attempt to respond to these challenges, in spite of the fact that he had only joined the faculty a few years earlier. The title of the lecture series, “Prolegomena to Shin Buddhist Studies,” seems to have been inspired by Kant’s “Prolegomena,” which refers to a systematic introduction to an academic inquiry. Kaneko states, “With a spirit like that [of Kant], I would like to talk about my ideas about Shin Buddhist studies.”⁸ Since Kant’s “Prolegomena” is also a summary of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kaneko likely had in mind the methodology and structure of Kant’s transcendental philosophy (critical philosophy), which Kant began to lay out in *Critique of Pure Reason*. In this work, Kant addressed the question of how it is possible to do philosophy (metaphysics) as academic inquiry. Kaneko applied this same question to the academic discipline of Shin Buddhist studies. A translation of Kant’s “Prolegomena” by Kuwaki Gen’yoku 桑木巖翼 (1874–1946) and Amano Teiyū 天野貞祐 (1884–1980) was published in 1914,⁹ which Kaneko probably read. In 1923, Kaneko’s lectures were published as a book with the same title as that of the lecture series. After the lectures, from the end of the Taishō era to the first years of the Shōwa era, Kaneko’s work as a scholar proceeded smoothly, with articles and books appearing in rapid succession. In 1925, *The Idea of the Pure Land* was published, and *The Idea of the Tathāgata and the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism*¹⁰ appeared in 1926. Criticisms of these two books forced him to write “My Shin Buddhist Studies,” the series of articles that is the subject of this article, as a response in 1928.

The main criticism of Kaneko targeted his theory of the Pure Land, as developed in *The Idea of the Pure Land* and *The Tathāgata and the Idea of the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism*. First, I will briefly look at Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land in these two books.

⁷ See Kokusai Bukkyō Kenkyū 2007, p. 85.

⁸ Kaneko 1966, p. 12.

⁹ Kuwaki and Amano 1914.

¹⁰ For the first edition, the title on the cover of the book is *Nyorai oyobi jōdo no kannen* (*The Tathāgata and the Idea of the Pure Land*), but the title page inside the book says *Shinshū ni okeru nyorai oyobi jōdo no kannen* (*The Tathāgata and the Idea of the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism*). In this article, I use the second title.

This will give us an idea of the crucial and controversial features of Kaneko’s Pure Land thought from the end of the Taishō era to the beginning of the Shōwa era. After that, I will take a closer look at Kaneko’s thought by reviewing the criticisms of Kaneko and then Kaneko’s counterarguments.

KANEKO’S THEORY OF THE PURE LAND

Kaneko’s book, *The Idea of the Pure Land*, was based on a transcription of lectures he delivered in October 1924 entitled “The Idea of the Pure Land in Mahayana Buddhism.” *The Idea of the Tathāgata and the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism* is a transcript of lectures given the following year. The first book focused on Kaneko’s interpretation of the Pure Land, and the second focused on the Tathāgata, rather than the Pure Land, because he had already outlined his interpretation of the Pure Land in the earlier work. The three characteristic features of Kaneko’s view of the Pure Land and his understanding of Shin Buddhism during this period were: (1) his focus on the issue of the Pure Land; (2) his use of introspection (*naikan* 内観) as his method; and (3) the fact that his interpretations were heavily focused on explaining the Pure Land in terms of the meaning it held in the actual experience of human life. I will look at the three characteristics in order.

Focus on the Pure Land

During the Edo period, ordinary people generally believed that Shin Buddhism offered salvation through “birth in a Pure Land paradise that was a real place, an actual world that could be experienced with one’s senses, existing in the western direction with myriad wondrous features.”¹¹ In contrast, as is well known, in the Meiji era, Kiyozawa said, “The Tathāgata I believe in does not wait for the next life, but has already given me great happiness in this life.”¹² Concerning the Pure Land, Kiyozawa also said, “I have not yet experienced the happiness of the next life. Therefore I can say nothing about it here.”¹³ Taking the stance that he could believe only what he could experience firsthand—that is, a position that prioritized actual experience—Kiyozawa concluded that although Amida can be experienced, it is impossible to experience the Pure Land. From a young age, Kaneko had been uncomfortable with a simplistic belief in the literal reality of the Pure Land,¹⁴ so it was not hard for him to accept Kiyozawa’s position. In this

¹¹ Tamura 1959, p. 246.

¹² KMZI 6: 162–63.

¹³ KMZI 6: 163.

¹⁴ “I chant the *nenbutsu* 念佛 and visit the Pure Land. This was the belief of our parents, which we remember fondly. However, [nowadays] educated people find it difficult to sympathize with this belief and consider it to be merely the superstition of the elderly. This is a question that I have been asking

way, in 1915, with guidance from Soga, Kaneko published *The Teachings and History of Shin Buddhism*, in which he wrote, “Shin Buddhist faith lies in grasping the relationship between Amida and sentient beings.”¹⁵ Kaneko looked at Pure Land thought, not from the perspective of the Pure Land, but from the perspective of Amida’s relationship with sentient beings.¹⁶ However, at the basis of Kaneko’s sense of alienation from a naive belief in the literal existence of the Pure Land, there was also a strong desire to recognize some sort of reality for the Pure Land, albeit not a simplistic physical reality. That desire was one factor that later motivated Kaneko to develop aspects of Kiyozawa’s position further and create a new theory of the Pure Land.

In addition to the influence of Kiyozawa from the Meiji era, there was another factor in the development of Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land—a criticism of the Pure Land made by Nonomura Naotarō 野々村直太郎 (1870–1946) in the Taishō era.¹⁷ Two years before the publication of Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*, Nonomura had published *Jōdokyō hiban* 浄土教批判 (hereafter, *A Critique of Pure Land Buddhism*; 1923) which caused a sensation that Kaneko could not ignore. According to Nonomura, “The idea of birth in the Pure Land is [an outmoded way of thinking] from the past, and this idea should no longer be accepted in the present or the future.”¹⁸ For Nonomura, the Pure Land was nothing more than a myth that is not worth taking seriously. “The existence of the idea of birth in the Pure Land is a matter of happenstance that has nothing to do with the essence of what makes a religion a religion.”¹⁹ Kiyozawa, with his emphasis on “experience,” made no determination, one way or the other, about whether the Pure Land exists. Nonomura may have intended his critique of Pure Land Buddhism to “disseminate Pure Land Buddhism as true religion,” but

myself since I was a child. . . . Do paradise and hell really exist? If yes, then won’t someone [like me] who doubts their existence be the first one to end up in hell? This was the anguish of my young mind at age eight or nine. When I think back on it now, this doubt was destined to shape my life. Thanks to that early anguish, I can now feel the guidance of the teachings deeply within myself. Therefore, I intend to continue to study the true meaning of these teachings” (Kaneko 1946b, pp. 3–4).

¹⁵ Kaneko 1965, p. 10.

¹⁶ In *The Idea of the Pure Land*, Kaneko wrote: “I could not clearly grasp the Pure Land, and I ultimately came to the conclusion that for our religious lives the Pure Land is of no great importance. What is truly crucial is the Buddha. I came to think that the only thing necessary is to understand the Buddha. In the past, I even considered creating a faith centered solely on the Tathāgata” (Kaneko 1925b, p. 23). In the preface to the revised edition of *Shinshū no kyōgi oyobi sono rekishi* (originally published in 1941 and 1942 as two volumes entitled *Shinshū no kyōgi to sono rekishi* 真宗の教義とその歴史), Kaneko wrote: “I am the author of this book, but this edition has been made possible by Soga Ryōjin’s revisions and Tada Kanae’s enhancements. Their contributions have certainly added to the value of this book, yet that has also led to some ambiguity as well” (Kaneko 1965, p. 11).

¹⁷ Editor’s note: see Kigoshi Yasushi’s article on Nonomura in this issue of *The Eastern Buddhist*, pp. 31–47.

¹⁸ Nonomura 1923, p. 21.

¹⁹ Nonomura 1923, p. 62.

he fundamentally denied both the existence and significance of the Pure Land, treating it as something “superstitious” or “mythical.” In response to Nonomura’s proclamation that the Pure Land was no longer necessary, Kaneko wrote, “Yet today, even though the idea that faith and religion are entirely possible without concepts like the Pure Land has become quite prevalent, I just cannot be satisfied with that and have been possessed with the thought that in fact the Pure Land must hold some sort of significance for us.”²⁰ The 1910s and 1920s were a time when the idea that faith is an interior, individual matter, originally introduced in the Meiji period, spread broadly among a wide range of people together with the liberal trends of Taishō democracy, taking on various concrete forms. On the one hand, there were people like Nonomura who advocated “modern thinking aimed at this world and focused on human life in the present,” a “so-called humanism”²¹ that rejected Amida Buddha and the Pure Land as relics of the feudal era. On the other hand, Kaneko—while, like Nonomura, aiming for an understanding of the Pure Land that was focused on human life in the present—nonetheless thought that the Pure Land had a positive meaning for human subjectivity. In this way, while following Kiyozawa and Nonomura in distancing himself from a simplistic acceptance of the reality of the Pure Land, Kaneko, unlike Kiyozawa and Nonomura, still hoped to acknowledge some form of reality or meaning for the Pure Land. This was consistent with Kaneko’s boyhood concerns, and it also coincided with the demands of the times. He thus turned to an interpretation of the Shin teachings that was centered on the Pure Land.

Introspection as a Method

Following Kiyozawa’s emphasis on experience and the method of introspection, Kaneko adopted introspection as his method for Shin Buddhist studies. In the first chapter of *The Idea of the Pure Land* and in *The Idea of the Tathāgata and the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism*, Kaneko considers Amida Buddha and the Pure Land as they appear through introspection or self-reflection. For Kaneko, this introspection is multilayered. As it develops, one becomes aware of oneself as an ordinary person and feels a sense of anguish over one’s own impurity and a consciousness of one’s limited, evil nature. Kaneko employs Kiyozawa’s vocabulary, where introspection, meaning “to regard oneself,” is equated with self-reflection. Kiyozawa said, “When it comes to self-cultivation, doesn’t reflecting on oneself mean reflecting on the reality of one’s own actions? If that is the case, it must be entirely introspection.”²² Introspection in Kiyozawa’s Seishinshugi was the impetus for his extreme emphasis on other power, which was finally fully

²⁰ Kaneko 1966, p. 3. Translation from Conway, forthcoming.

²¹ Nonomura 1923, p. 22.

²² KMZI 7: 210.

expressed in his final essay, “Waga shinnen” 我信念 (My Faith).²³ For him, introspection means a psychological and epistemological inquiry into one’s own existence, as well as ethical reflection and spiritual cultivation. Kaneko’s introspection has a similar coloration.

The Meaning of the Pure Land in Actual Human Life

In *Prolegomena to Shin Buddhist Studies*, Kaneko defines “pure Shin Buddhist studies” by stating that “the fundamental idea of Shin Buddhist studies” is not to study how Shinran “researched texts” but to “study the way that Shinran studied.”²⁴ Kaneko expressed the same idea in a different way in *The Idea of the Tathāgata and the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism* based on Kant’s statement in *Critique of Pure Reason* that “we do not learn philosophy. As far as reason is concerned, at best we can just learn to do philosophy,”²⁵ writing, “We do not learn Shin Buddhism, we *do* Shin Buddhist studies.”²⁶ “Doing Shin Buddhist studies” means “learning from one’s whole life, learning the totality of the path that one should follow in one’s life.”²⁷ Kaneko’s stance that seeks to see the significance of the Pure Land in terms of one’s own life is a form of practical study, or *gyōgaku* 行学, which is realized within one’s individual experience through action and is contrasted with study that leads to understanding on an intellectual level (*gegaku* 解学). In Kaneko’s Shin Buddhist studies, Buddhism and the Pure Land are considered in terms of their meaning or reality for human beings living their lives, or for human life in the sense of the totality of the ordinary, daily activity of living.

So how does Kaneko understand this daily life? He holds that human life is made up of discreet, concrete “sensations.” “Our lives are direct sensations, directly felt with this very skin and heard with these very ears. In that sense, our lives are direct experience.”²⁸ Kaneko posits a gradation in these sensations, going from the impure to

²³ KMZI 6: 160–64; Blum and Rhodes 2011, pp. 93–98.

²⁴ Kaneko 1966, p. 30. See Blum and Rhodes 2011, p. 179.

²⁵ A 837 / B 865. For references to *Critique of Pure Reason*, “A” cites the page number in the first edition (Kant 1781) and “B” those in the second edition (Kant 1787). See Meiklejohn 1934, p. 474, for an alternate English translation.

²⁶ Kaneko 1926, p. 3.

²⁷ Kaneko 1926, p. 3.

²⁸ Kaneko 1968, p. 49. In addition, he writes that direct sensations are what can really be believed. “Religion is just one type of belief. And this belief is something that is directly sensed” (Kaneko 1966, p. 18). These “sensations” are sometimes described as “feelings” (*kanjō* 感情). Kaneko may also be influenced by Schleiermacher’s view of religion as a feeling of pure devotion. In 1914, Kiba Ryōhon published a translation of Schleiermacher’s *Monologen: Nebst den Vorarbeiten in Seishinkai* (vol. 14, nos. 5, 6, 8, 10, 12). In *Shūkyōteki risei* 宗教の理性, Kaneko describes religion as “a feeling of utmost pure devotion” (Kaneko 1922). However, in contrast to Soga, who generally emphasizes the unique

the pure. The everyday self senses objects based on impure sensations and lives its life in a world that is composed of the totality of these sensations. This is the way an ordinary person lives in the world of ignorance. Through reflection and introspection on the nature of this inauthentic self, the senses are purified. Kaneko refers to the object of pure sensation as “pure objectivity.”²⁹ Whereas for each individual, ordinary self is something that has been created by that deluded self and is solely immanent to itself, pure objectivity is both immanent and transcendent, subjective and objective: “In that it is purely objective, it transcends me, but in its transcendence of me, it is also enveloping me.”³⁰ Pure objectivity has a different mode of existence from “what we ordinarily mean by ‘existing.’”³¹ Kaneko’s terminology is not exactly the same as Kant’s, but in *Higan no sekai* 彼岸の世界 (hereafter, *The World of the Other Shore*), published in the same year as *The Idea of the Pure Land*, he often used the word “a priori” (*senken* 先験 or *senkenteki* 先験的)³² instead of “pure,” suggesting that he wanted to affirm the transcendental reality found in Kant’s philosophy.³³

Kaneko applies the concept of pure objectivity to the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma, sangha), stating that the *dharmakāya* of Dharma nature (*hosshō hosshin* 法性法身) as the essential element of the *dharmakāya* of expedient means (*hōben*

position of feelings in faith, Kaneko mainly discusses faith in relation to sensations (see Murayama 2012).

²⁹ Kaneko had already used the term “pure objectivity” before *The Idea of the Pure Land*. For example, in his article “Nijū no sekai” 二重の世界 (hereafter, “A Dual World”) published in 1918 in *Seishinkai* (vol. 19, no. 9), he used “pure objectivity” to refer to the Pure Land as the Other Shore. See Kaneko 1921, pp. 110, 112.

³⁰ Kaneko 1925b, p. 21.

³¹ Kaneko 1925b, p. 19.

³² Kaneko 1925b, pp. 3, 90, and elsewhere. The adjective *senkenteki* 先験的 (a priori or transcendental) is a translation of the Kantian term *transzendental*. In Kaneko’s time, *transzendental* was translated as *senkenteki* but it is now translated as *chōestsuronteki* 超越論的. Starting around 1922, Soga began to use the words *senken* 先験 and *senken suru* 先験する prolifically. See note 34.

³³ Concerning Kaneko’s idea of the a priori reality of the Pure Land, see Murayama 2011. Kaneko’s use of the word “pure” (*junsui* 純粹) may have been influenced by neo-Kantian thinkers, as well as by Nishida Kitarō’s concept of “pure experience” (*junsui keiken* 純粹經驗). As to the relationship between Saihō Jōdo and Nishida’s pure experience, see “Saihō Jōdo” 西方淨土 in Kaneko 1963, p. 125. Early on, Kaneko read Bergson, who touches on the concept of “pure continuity” (see Soga Ryōjin Senshū Kankōkai 1971, p. 13). In the philosophical world of the Taishō era, Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and neo-Kantian philosophers such as Hermann Cohen (1842–1918) and Heinrich Rickert (1863–1936) were popular, and Kaneko’s reading of Bergson may have been connected to Nishida. In Nishida’s *Zen no kenkyū* 善の研究 (*An Inquiry into the Good*), he emphasizes the relationship between pure experience and will. Kaneko thinks that the original vow can be described as “pure will” (or pure desire). He writes that “the original vow is clearly described as ‘pure will’ in Vasubandhu’s commentary, *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya*, on Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* (Ch. *She dasheng lun* 撰大乘論). Nowadays, we use *junsui* (pure) instead of *shōjō* 清淨 [i.e., the traditional Buddhist term for pure] when talking about ‘pure’ will. So perhaps ‘pure will’ is the original vow” (Kaneko 1926, p. 48).

hosshin 方便法身) is pure objectivity as an object of pure sensation. Vairocana Buddha and Amida Buddha are said to be the personification of “Great Śākyamuni,” which Kaneko holds is the essential element that makes Śākyamuni Śākyamuni. Furthermore, it is nirvana that makes the Dharma the Dharma, and being a bodhisattva with the mind that seeks enlightenment is what makes a monk a monk. Regarding the sangha, Kaneko calls a community where pure objectivity plays an integral role the “world of the idea” (*kannenkai* 觀念界). In contrast to society as a totality whose members act in accord with social principles, what is generally called the church (or the religious world) refers to a totality where the members are encompassed under religious principles. Kaneko holds that the world of the idea is the “invisible church” that lies behind the “visible church” and makes the visible church what it is. It is clear that this conception of the “world of the idea” is influenced by Plato’s realm of ideas and Kant’s “realm of wisdom” (*mundus intelligibilis*), which is said to serve as the object of pure enlightenment. It is also influenced by Kant’s “kingdom of ends” (*Reich der Zwecke*), which he sets forth in his practical philosophy and the Reformed Church’s concept of the “invisible church,”³⁴ which he adopted in his theory of religion (in *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*). These latter two—the “kingdom of ends” and the “invisible church”—are both *Idee* (i.e., conceptions of reason, principles, or ideals).³⁵

³⁴ In 1918, Hatano Seiichi 波多野精一 and Miyamoto Wakichi 宮本和吉 published a translation of Kant’s *Critique of Practical Reason*. In 1921, Amano Teiyū published a translation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Although there were no Japanese translations of Kant’s works on religion at that time, Kaneko probably learned about Kant’s theories from the classes and writings of two of his colleagues: Tomonaga Sanjūrō 朝永三十郎 (1871–1951), a historian of philosophy who was known for his *Kinsei ni okeru ‘ga’ no jikaku shi: Shinrisō shugi to sono haikai* 近世における「我」の自覚史：新理想主義と其背景 (The “Self” in Modernity and the History of Self-Consciousness: New Idealism and its Background, 1916) and *Kanto no heiwaron* カントの平和論 (hereafter, *Kant’s Theory of Peace*; 1922) and who often contributed to *Seishinkai*; and Kihira Tadayoshi 紀平正美 (1874–1949), who was well versed in German idealism (see notes 38 and 49).

³⁵ In contrast to my position here that Kaneko’s use of the term “idea” was primarily influenced by Kant’s philosophy (and by the theory of the idea in Plato’s philosophy which is the source for Kant’s concept of the *Idee*) Hataya Akira and Tatsutani Akio present a different interpretation, arguing that “Kaneko’s focus on the term idea was likely based in large part on the Platonic thought regarding the idea, as well as being influenced by the Neo-Kantian epistemology that was popular at the time” (Hataya and Tatsutani 1993, p. 330). However, as I have argued elsewhere (Murayama 2011, p. 115), their stance is insufficient for the following two reasons. First, they do not state what portion of Kaneko’s work serves as the basis for their claim. Second, they do not clarify the specific content of the “Neo-Kantian epistemology” that they hold influenced Kaneko, leaving open questions such as whether it refers to the Marburg school or to the Southwest German school, and which philosopher in particular influenced Kaneko. Regarding these questions, Kaneko does mention Hermann Cohen in his *Prolegomena to Shin Buddhist Studies*, where he says, “I think it was Cohen who says that a principle is the self-consciousness of a concept, which I believe is quite an interesting stance. . . . There must be something in the basis of a concept. In the foundation of a concept, there is a principle, an *Idee*. When that *Idee* appears it takes the form of a specific concept” (Kaneko 1966, pp. 42–43). Kaneko may have read the translation of Cohen’s *Logik der reinen Erkenntnis* (Logic of

On the other hand, while Plato and Kant tend to emphasize the active nature of the subject acting upon the world rather than as a passive recipient of sense information, Kaneko’s emphasis on sensation is due not only to the structurally passive nature of other-power religion, but it also seems to have been an attempt on Kaneko’s part to avoid the danger of being overly identified with Western philosophy by giving his interpretation a strong tone of passivity.

This emphasis on the relationship between religion and the world of the idea was already apparent in Kaneko’s *Prolegomena to Shin Buddhist Studies*,³⁶ and it continues to guide Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land. In chapter 2 of *The Idea of the Pure Land*, Kaneko divides the Pure Land, as described in Buddhist scriptures since ancient times, into three types: the Pure Land of the Idea (*kannen no jōdo* 觀念の浄土), the Pure Land as an Ideal (*risō no jōdo* 理想の浄土), and the Pure Land of Actual Existence (*jitsuzai no jōdo* 実在の浄土). The Pure Land of the Idea is said to be the foundation of the visible (experiential) world, but it itself is invisible and does not exist as an empirical object. The Pure Land as an Ideal does not exist now, but it can be realized (materialized) as an ideal of society and the church by using the Pure Land of the Idea as a model. It is a Pure Land whose purpose is to come into existence. It is distinguished from the Pure Land of the Idea, which may or may not exist as an empirical object and the empirical existence of which does not matter one way or the other. There is some ambiguity in the distinction between the two in *The Idea of the Pure Land*. However, in *Jōdo no shomondai* 浄土の諸問題 (Issues Concerning the Pure Land), Kaneko makes a distinction between the Pure Land as an Ideal, which corresponds to the “relative ideal”—that is, “the ideal that can somehow be attained by human effort”—and the Pure Land of the Idea, which corresponds to the “absolute ideal” (the pure ideal) that “cannot be attained by human effort, no matter

Pure Knowledge) that was published by Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店 in 1921. Yet since it is only natural that a Neo-Kantian philosopher like Cohen would make reference to Kant’s *Idee*, this one statement does not serve as a sufficient basis to argue that Kaneko’s idea is based specifically on Neo-Kantian epistemology and not just on Kant himself. In *The Idea of the Pure Land*, Kaneko refers just to Kant and not to Neo-Kantian philosophy. The attempt to see the source for Kaneko’s concept of the idea in Neo-Kantian philosophy may be Mori Ryūkichi’s statement about the situation in which *The Idea of the Pure Land* was written: “It seems to be heavily influenced by Taishō-period philosophy, particularly the German idealism of the Neo-Kantian school” (Mori 1982, pp. 162–63). Mori, however, does not set forth any basis for this claim.

³⁶ “I think the people of the past perceived the ideal world much more clearly and perceived the actual world as dreams or illusions to the same degree that we now consider the actual world to be real. When we experience this reversal, when this ‘floating world’ becomes empty, we perceive that there is something to this ideal world which we have taken to be empty. Furthermore, we come to perceive that we are fulfilled only in that ideal world. Without such reversal, I don’t think religion would exist” (Kaneko 1966, p. 25; Rhodes 2011, p. 109).

how hard we might try.”³⁷ Kaneko uses the terms “absolute,” “pure,” and “a priori” almost synonymously. It seems that this absolute ideal might correspond to the “unattainable idea” (*unerreichbare Idee*) or “unrealizable idea” (*unausführbare Idee*) in Kant’s philosophical terminology.³⁸ Kaneko writes, “It must be the world of a priori. If you

³⁷ Kaneko 1968, pp. 230–31.

³⁸ See Tomonaga 1931, pp. 74–75. The first edition of Tomonaga’s *Kanto no heiwaron* カントの平和論 (Kant’s Theory of Peace) was published by Kaizōsha 改造社 in May of 1922. I believe we can surmise that Kaneko’s understanding of the Pure Land was influenced by Tomonaga’s interpretation of Kant’s theory of the ideal community discussed in that work. Although it is necessary to consider this possibility at greater length, here, I would just like to quote Tomonaga’s discussion of Kant’s theory of the ideal community. He writes:

The meaning of Kant’s term “principle” seems to be well known to those who have general knowledge about his philosophy . . . but I would like to make reference to Kant’s own explanation here. It seems that the passage in the section on “Ideas in General” in book 1 of the “Transcendental Dialectic” in his *Critique of Pure Reason* is most appropriate to our purposes. It is here that Kant makes reference to Plato’s ideal state (*Republik*), the first work to bring the word principle (*Idee*) into philosophical discourse, saying as follows:

The Platonic republic has become proverbial as an example—and a striking one—of imaginary perfection, such as can exist only in the brain of an idle thinker. . . . But we should do better to follow up this thought, and . . . employ new efforts to place it in clearer light. . . . A constitution of the greatest possible human freedom according to laws, by which the liberty of every individual can consist with the liberty of every other . . . is, to say the least, a necessary idea, which must be placed at the foundation not only of the first plan of the constitution of a state, but of all its laws. And in this, it is not necessary at the outset to take account of the obstacles which lie in our way—obstacles which perhaps do not necessarily arise from the character of human nature, but rather from the previous *neglect of true ideas* in legislation. For *there is nothing more pernicious and more unworthy of a philosopher, than the vulgar appeal to a so-called adverse experience* . . . while instead of this, conceptions, crude for the very reason that they have been drawn from experience, have marred and frustrated all our better views and intentions. The more legislation and government are in harmony with this idea, the more rare do punishments become, and thus it is quite reasonable to maintain, as Plato did, that in a perfect state no punishments at all would be necessary. Now *although a perfect state may never exist, the idea is not on that account the less just, which holds up this maximum as the archetype or standard of a constitution*, in order to bring legislative government always nearer and nearer to the greatest possible perfection. [English translation from Meiklejohn 1934, pp. 220–21.]

The meaning of Kant’s “*Idee*” as a norm that is an eternal imperative—an imperative that transcends time, an imperative that is charged upon one yet not given resolution—seems to be explained very clearly here using the practical example of the problem of politics. *The fundamental significance of the Idee lies in the fact that it is an imperative.* Whether it will someday be fully realized, or whether it will ever be fully realizable does nothing to affect its appropriateness. Even if its realization were absolutely impossible, it still has immense value. Why? Because in the realm of ethics, law, and religion, *it is not that one can derive those principles from the experiential facts of reality, but that the idea as*

don't like the word a priori, then you can call it the world of the pure ideal. . . . Not the ideal that can be realized, but the ideal that we cannot imagine being realized . . . yet existing in the true sense of the term."³⁹ The Pure Land of Actual Existence is the Pure Land as an Ideal that can actually be realized. It exists somewhere, and it is the Pure Land to which the teachings say we will go.

Of the three types of Pure Lands, the Pure Land of Actual Existence is a Pure Land of naive belief, and the Pure Land as an Ideal shares some characteristics with the Pure Land of Actual Existence in that it is oriented toward being actualized in this world. Kaneko's choice to remove these two types of pure lands from the focus of his discussion indicates that he did not at the outset intend to emphasize them in his considerations of the topic. From the standpoint of other-power religion, which takes a cautious attitude regarding the human capacity to realize ideals through individual effort, it was necessary for Kaneko to maintain a certain distance from both the Pure Land as an Ideal and the Pure Land of Actual Existence. The Pure Land as an Ideal, the realization of which becomes a practical goal, takes on the meaning of an ethical or moral community, while the Pure Land of Actual Existence refers to a world where that ideal has been realized, so both prioritize the autonomous efforts of individual actors in order to bring about the realization of the goal, which shifts the locus of agency for liberation from Amida and his vows to human subjects. Kaneko writes, "The aspiration to create in this world a buddha land (as an ideal world) is nothing more than a sort of theory of morality and not something that can genuinely save us. . . . All we can do is to eternally hold the world of the other shore in our minds."⁴⁰ Thus, the Pure Land of the Idea is emphasized. The Pure Land of the Idea, which transcends individual existence—in that sense, the "other shore"—and which makes individual existence possible—in that sense, actually existing—is described as "a world as yet unseen, yet also the familiar home for which we long."⁴¹ It is "the real world in the true sense of the word."⁴²

an (organizing) principle is what first makes such experiences possible. Yet while the reason that those ideas are not fully realized may inevitably lie in human nature itself, the most essential reason is that one does not admit this significance in the *Idee* and, based on the fact that their complete realization is impossible, one immediately disparages them as empty fantasy, instead taking coarse concepts derived from experience to be principles. (Tomonaga 1931, pp. 80–84. Italics are Tomonaga's.)

³⁹ Kaneko 1975, p. 98.

⁴⁰ Kaneko 1925b, p. 169.

⁴¹ Kaneko 1925b, p. 1. Earlier than *The Idea of the Pure Land*, Kaneko had already written something similar in "A Dual World": "Is the nirvana that we long for and seek in fact literally emptiness? . . . If anything, nirvana is the true existence, and our world of various beings is nothing but emptiness" (Kaneko 1943, pp. 108–9).

⁴² Kaneko 1925b, p. 153.

CRITICISMS OF KANEKO'S WORKS

What kind of criticism was leveled at Kaneko's theory of the Pure Land? These criticisms constitute one part of the so-called "Kaneko problem," that is, the accusation that Kaneko promoted heretical beliefs.⁴³ After various turns of events, Kaneko was eventually forced to resign from the university,⁴⁴ and he had to resign from the priesthood as well.

According to Kikumura Norihiko, the background to this "Kaneko problem" was the conflict between the old and new schools of thought at Otani University.⁴⁵ From the time that Shinshū University was established in Tokyo, there was a conflict between the scholars trained in the older Takakura Academy system,⁴⁶ who practiced the traditional Edo-style exegesis of doctrine, and the "modernist" followers of Kiyozawa who had studied at Shinshū University, or its preceding modern academic institutions—in other words, a conflict between traditional and modern approaches to Shin Buddhist studies. Indeed, there must have been friction between professors such as Saitō Yuishin 斎藤唯信 (1864–1957) and Kōno Hōun 河野法雲 (1867–1946) on the one hand and professors such as Kaneko and Soga (who also ultimately left the university in the wake of Kaneko's departure). However, if you look at the details, the issue is more complicated than just the interpersonal politics of one university. Saitō and Kōno were both members of the Jitōryō 侍董寮, a separate body under the jurisdiction of the head temple that was responsible for doctrinal research and various deliberations. As members of the Jitōryō, they passed judgment on the "Kaneko problem." Kaneko's ideas first became an issue outside the confines of Otani University politics when a Shin follower who was concerned about the heretical nature of Kaneko's writings brought that question up at Ryukoku University, a sectarian university of the Nishi 西 Honganji sect. After that, Higashi Honganji came to regard Kaneko's ideas about the Pure Land as a problem, but students at Otani University formed a movement to defend Kaneko. The *Chūgai nippō* reported on the particulars of all these different events and also published the opinions of readers with various perspectives—including graduates of Otani University, Zen priests, and Christians—such that the incident attracted the attention of people from a wide range of backgrounds and positions in society. There were two particularly strong and vocal critics of Kaneko's interpretation of the Pure Land. One was Murakami

⁴³ For more details on the "Kaneko problem" as a whole, including the expulsion of Soga, see Miharu 1990.

⁴⁴ Official university records show that Kaneko resigned from his position of his own accord on June 12, 1928.

⁴⁵ Kikumura 1975, p. 82.

⁴⁶ Among the scholars in the Takakura Academy, there were also two camps: those who tried to maintain the traditional scholarly interpretations and those who wanted to modify and modernize the tradition. See Yasutomi 2010, p. 75.

Senshō, a former president of Otani University who himself had been accused of heresy for stating that the “Mahayana scriptures were not preached by the Buddha” in his book *Bukkyō toitsu ron* 仏教統一論 (hereafter, *On the Unification of Buddhism*; 1901) and had left the priesthood. The other critic was Tada Kanae, who, like Kaneko, was a follower of Kiyozawa and had helped to publish Kaneko’s works. From our perspective today, the “Kaneko problem” may appear to be a problem within a single university belonging to a single sect, but the coverage in the *Chūgai nippō* reveals that it also encompassed a complex, conflicting, and interlocking set of issues connected to the myriad of competing positions and interests brought together under the terms “university” and “sect.”

In the following, I will limit my discussion to the criticisms made by Murakami and Tada. Since those criticisms motivated Kaneko to write “My Shin Buddhist Studies,” I will then explain Kaneko’s rebuttals. I will conclude this article with a simple interpretation of “My Shin Buddhist Studies” that points out some problems with Kaneko’s ideas.

Murakami’s Criticism of Kaneko

Murakami’s criticism of Kaneko’s interpretation of the Pure Land, published in *Chūgai nippō* in June 1928, was written when he was in Atami 熱海, Izu 伊豆, recuperating from an illness. At that time, Murakami reported that he had not yet read Kaneko’s two publications connected with the heresy question and did not have the publications at hand. Murakami’s articles are listed below.

- June 10, 1928. “Honganji no anjin mondai (1)” 本願寺の安心問題 (一) (The Issue of Orthodox Faith at Higashi Honganji, Part 1).
- June 14, 1928. “Honganji no anjin mondai (2)” 本願寺の安心問題 (二) (hereafter, The Issue of Orthodox Faith at Higashi Honganji, Part 2).
- June 15, 1928. “Honganji no anjin mondai (3)” 本願寺の安心問題 (三) (The Issue of Orthodox Faith at Higashi Honganji, Part 3).
- June 16, 1928. “Ōtani Daigaku kyōju Kaneko-kun ni atauru kōkaijō tsukeri chinami ni dōdaigaku ni keikoku su” 大谷大学教授金子君に与ふる公開状 附り、因みに同大学に警告す (hereafter, An Open Letter to Professor Kaneko of Otani University and a Warning to That University).

Later, after reading Kaneko’s responses to his criticisms in the same newspaper, Murakami read Kaneko’s two books and promptly published a more detailed opinion, in a short book entitled *Shinshū no shinmenmoku wa nahen ni zonsuru ka* 真宗の真面目は那邊に存する乎 (hereafter, *Where is the True Essence of Shin Buddhism?*) that was published on August 15.

In “The Issue of Orthodox Faith at Higashi Honganji, Part 2,” Murakami writes that professors who want to resign should be allowed to resign, students who make trouble and will not listen to the university’s explanations and admonitions should be expelled, and the university should be temporarily closed. In part 3, Murakami writes that Kaneko should take responsibility for his actions and resign of his own accord, while Soga, who shares Kaneko’s views, should take the same course of action. Murakami was upset that Kaneko had called Shinran simply “Shinran,” without an honorific, and had denied the existence of the Pure Land. In Murakami’s opinion, anyone who would refer to Shinran in such a disrespectful manner “should not be a professor at Otani University” and someone who denies the Pure Land is “a great sinner who seeks to destroy the sect from its very foundation,” and he likened Kaneko to “a worm in a lion’s body” (that is, someone who will destroy the sect from within).

The front page of the June 16 issue of *Chūgai nippō* was entirely devoted to Murakami’s “An Open Letter to Professor Kaneko of Otani University and a Warning to the University.” There, Murakami makes the following points. First, he holds that the Pure Land teachings recognize the existence of the Western Pure Land from the standpoint of *shihō rissō* 指方立相 (provisionally designating a specific direction where the Pure Land exists and setting forth specific adornments that are expressive of ultimate truth) as clarified by Shandao 善導 (613–681), and it is not for the Zen monk Zhijue 智覺 (i.e., Yongming Yanshou 永明延寿 [904–975]), or the philosopher Kiyozawa, or a Shin Buddhist priest, or a scholar of Shin doctrinal studies (*shūjō* 宗乘)⁴⁷ to refuse to acknowledge this. Murakami had been the fourth president of Otani University (serving from 1926 to 1928), which had its roots in the Shinshū University established under Kiyozawa’s leadership in Tokyo. This statement essentially amounts to him saying that Kiyozawa—the first president of Otani University, who declared it to be “an institution for the study of Shin Buddhism”—completely lacked a grasp of the basic tenets of Shin Buddhism.

Second, Murakami states that “free inquiry” within universities is generally permitted as long as the discussion does not “conflict with the state or harm the dignity of the Imperial Household.” In the case of a university run under the auspices of a sect, however, such free inquiry should only be permitted to the extent that it “does not conflict with the doctrines of the sect,” and students who do not accept this should withdraw from the university. In short, what Murakami wants to say in his *Chūgai nippō* article is that anyone who, in the name of free research, does not respect the doctrines of Shin Buddhism—and the word “doctrine” includes both “the character of the person who

⁴⁷ In many schools of Buddhism, the study of a denomination’s own doctrine was referred to as *shūjō* (the “sectarian vehicle”) whereas research on doctrines of other Buddhist schools was called *yōjō* 余乘 (“other vehicles”). The term *shūjō* was used during the Taishō period in the Shinshū Ōtani University curriculum. Until Kaneko spoke of the significance of using the new appellation “Shin Buddhist studies” in 1922, the term *shūjō* was widely used to refer to Shin doctrinal studies.

conveys the teachings” and “the truth of the content of the teachings”—should leave the university, whether they are a teacher or a student.

Next, let us consider his stance in *Where is the True Essence of Shin Buddhism?* Murakami wrote the first four *Chūgai nippō* articles, with their tone of rebuke, without having read Kaneko’s two books. Murakami was then criticized from many quarters for thinking that he could write the articles without knowing the content of Kaneko’s books. One person wrote, “I want you to avoid being so derisive, which is not like a scholar, and I would like you to know Professor Kaneko’s theory thoroughly and refute it academically.”⁴⁸ Based on this type of public response to his criticism, Murakami changed his method of criticism in *Where is the True Essence Shin Buddhism?* After first “perusing” the two books and admitting that Kaneko “has a philosophical genius,”⁴⁹ Murakami slightly softened his high-handed preachy tone and pointed out Kaneko’s errors—but still from a condescending point of view. The errors are: (a) contradictions between Kaneko’s stance and the Shin Buddhist teachings (taking up the position of other schools of Buddhism); (b) destruction of the Shin doctrinal classification system; (c) confusing philosophy and religion; (d) disregarding scriptural evidence; (e) denying the unique characteristics of Shin Buddhism. To put it simply, in his criticism of (a), Murakami writes that Kaneko took the position of “self-nature and mind-only”—that

⁴⁸ *Chūgai nippō*, June 17, 1928, front-page editorial.

⁴⁹ From the preface of *Where is the True Essence Shin Buddhism?* (Murakami 1928, p. 4). Murakami describes Kaneko’s philosophical qualities: “I have heard that Kaneko studied Western philosophy with Dr. Kihira [Tadayoshi] and others at Otani University. I also heard that he was inspired by Kiyozawa Manshi during the time he was involved with Kōkōdō in Tokyo. I can imagine that he is a person who is naturally skilled at philosophical thought, and he seems to be the sort of person who cannot understand anything without deeply considering it himself” (Murakami 1928, p. 5).

The following are some of the (partially overlapping) factors that may have prompted Kaneko’s move toward Western philosophy: (1) He was naturally inclined to want to think about and understand things for himself; (2) He was influenced by his teachers, including Kihira and Tomonaga, when he studied at Shinshū University; (3) His inclination to study Western philosophy broadly was fostered by his relationships with various people connected to Kōkōdō, including Kiyozawa and, through Kiyozawa, Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), who lectured on philosophy at the University of Tokyo; (4) There was a mutual influence between Kaneko’s thought and Soga’s research, which analyzed the *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論, which in itself has strong psychological and phenomenological overtones, using Western philosophy; (5) After Kaneko joined Shinshū Ōtani University, he interacted with Tomonaga and other colleagues—including part-time lecturers such as the Kant scholar Kuwaki Gen’yoku and Nishida Kitarō, who taught at Shinshū Ōtani University for more than a decade, starting in 1911; and (6) The 1922 University Ordinance mandated that, in order to be certified, a university must employ academic methodologies. It is likely that the above six factors also led Kaneko to focus particularly on Kantian philosophy grounded in subjectivity.

In contrast to Kiyozawa, whose background in Western philosophy came mostly from his association with the University of Tokyo, Kaneko was influenced by philosophers from both the University of Tokyo and from Kyoto University (i.e., Kihira, Tomonaga, and Nishida, the founder of the Kyoto school).

is, he asserted that Amida exists only in the mind and the Pure Land exists only within one's own body⁵⁰—a stance taken by exegetes of many different schools of Buddhism but explicitly rejected by Shinran, who writes that “the monks and laity of this latter age and the religious teachers of these times are floundering in conceptions of ‘self-nature’ and ‘mind-only’” (*Kyōgyōshinshō*, Chapter on Faith).⁵¹ Murakami holds that, as a result, (b) Kaneko ends up destroying the doctrinal classification system of Shin Buddhism, which clearly distinguishes its teachings as the Pure Land Gate over against the other schools of Buddhism that view the Pure Land teachings in terms of “self-nature and mind-only,” which in turn destroys Shin Buddhism itself. Further, this attitude of Kaneko's means that (d) he does not employ all three modes of valid cognition (direct perception, inference, or through the authority of the scriptures) necessary in doctrinal interpretation, but only the first two, ignoring the authority of the Shinshū scriptures as an absolute standard and instead simply judging the meaning of the scriptures through his own interpretation and argumentation. This results in (c) a confusion between philosophy and religion. As far as Murakami was concerned, Kaneko's two books were “an attempt to pander to the ideology of young people”⁵² and “the result of his understanding Buddhism through elements of Western philosophy.”⁵³ Therefore, Kaneko's position, which mixed in elements of Western philosophy, ignores (e) the essential characteristic of Shin Buddhism as a “religion of compassion” that values compassion over wisdom. For Murakami, this valuation of “compassion” takes the form of “abandoning all reason and logic and simply accepting salvation as beyond conceptual thought”⁵⁴—that is to say, being without both intellectually generated meaning and logic—while also “aiming at people in the lower social classes”⁵⁵ who lack the resources to engage in lofty philosophical pursuits. The view in (e) is based on Murakami's idea that philosophy is primarily concerned with “intellectual idealism,” while religion is concerned with the realization of “emotional satisfaction.”⁵⁶

To summarize Murakami's view, Kaneko's introduction of the method of introspection as a type of philosophical speculation with the aim of realizing wisdom into Shin Buddhism makes it essentially the same as the “Gate of the Path of the Sages” (*shōdōmon* 聖道門), or non-Pure Land Buddhist schools, thereby denying its distinc-

⁵⁰ Murakami consistently uses the term “within one's own mind” (*koshin* 己心), rather than the more common “within one's own body” (*koshin* 己身) in both his *Chūgai nippō* articles and in *Where is the True Identity of Shin Buddhism?*

⁵¹ TK, p. 95; CWS 1: 77.

⁵² Murakami 1928, pp. 23–24.

⁵³ Murakami 1928, p. 22.

⁵⁴ Murakami 1928, p. 88.

⁵⁵ Murakami 1928, p. 87.

⁵⁶ Murakami 1907, p. 144.

tive features as a religion of compassion oriented toward ordinary people who lack wisdom. In his *Chūgai nippō* articles, Murakami gives this as a concrete example of what he means when he talks about the prohibition against ignoring the doctrines of a sect in the name of free discussion. Reading Kaneko’s two books probably did not change Murakami’s view of Kaneko’s research. At the end of *Where is the True Essence Shin Buddhism?*, Murakami reflects that he himself had also made the mistake of “pandering to the ideology of middle-class society”⁵⁷ by setting forth the theory that the “Mahayana scriptures were not preached by the Buddha” (in *On the Unification of Buddhism*) and had been accused of heresy for it, but now that time had passed and he stood ill, facing his approaching death, he had attained an “intuition” whereby he came to understand the “practical study” of compassion he presented in this article. Murakami’s choice of words here is clearly intended to ridicule Kaneko’s interpretation of “practical study” and his methodology of introspection based on Kiyozawa’s focus on “actual experience.” Murakami closes the book expressing his hopes that someday soon Kaneko will also be able to reach the same stance that Murakami himself had been able to attain.

Tada’s Criticism of Kaneko

In contrast to Murakami, who initiated his criticism of Kaneko in *Chūgai nippō*, Tada had already criticized Kaneko in other publications. Tada criticized Kaneko in his article “‘Jōdo no kannen’ o yomu” 『浄土の観念』を読む (On Reading *The Idea of the Pure Land*) in *Midorigo* みどりご (vol. 4, no. 2), published in December 1926. Tada, who was not convinced by Kaneko’s response one month later in *Butsuza* 仏座, published “Kaneko shi no ‘Jōdo no kannen’ ni taisuru kansatsu” 金子氏の「浄土の観念」に対する観察 (hereafter, “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*”) in *Chūgai nippō* in eight parts between June 17 and 26, 1928, making essentially the same points that he had made in his *Midorigo* article. In addition, after Kaneko’s further response in *Chūgai nippō*, Tada published “Busso kaiken no jōdo” 仏祖開顯の浄土 (The Pure Land Revealed by the Buddha and the Patriarchs) in fourteen parts from July 19 to August 3. Here, I will focus on “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*,” which presents most of the points of Tada’s criticism. The eight articles, all with the same title, were published on June 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 26.

Tada’s eight articles can be roughly divided into two sections. The first four articles mainly target the incorrectness of Kaneko’s academic attitude as expressed in chapter 1 of *The Idea of the Pure Land*. In the fifth through eighth articles, Tada enumerates the problems that are caused by Kaneko’s attitude, which are apparent in chapter 2. I will look at Tada’s criticisms in order.

⁵⁷ Murakami 1928, p. 91.

Tada identifies the problems he finds in Kaneko's work by using three terms: "transmitted Dharma" (*denshō* 伝承), "individual realization" (*koshō* 己証), and "personal understanding" (*jige* 自解). The "transmitted Dharma" constitutes the truth of Buddhism as revealed by Shinran and by the Buddha Śākyamuni and the patriarchs who followed after him, written in the scriptures, and handed down to those who read those scriptures. "Individual realization" means to understand the transmitted Dharma for oneself, while "personal understanding" is an individual realization "based on one's own experience and ideas"⁵⁸ and not on the transmitted Dharma. Tada agreed with Kaneko's idea of distinguishing between the transmitted Dharma and individual realization, but Tada concludes that Kaneko's individual realization was actually a form of personal understanding. So, what is wrong with personal understanding? From Tada's perspective, individual realization that prioritizes personal understanding ultimately means one is relying on one's own discursive thinking (judgment based on dualistic discrimination) and is thus necessarily tarnished by a self-power attitude. In contrast, Tada believes that genuine individual realization can only arise through what Shinran called "listening to and reflecting on" (*monshi* 聞思) the teachings. The transmitted Dharma is not something that one can attain through introspection; rather, it is received only through humbly listening to the teachings. We can see here Tada's view that Kaneko's way of thinking was overly active, whereas a religion of other power should be passive.

Based on this reasoning, Tada criticized Kaneko's prioritization of "practical study" (*gyōgaku*) over study that leads to intellectual understanding (*gegaku*) as overly emphasizing the active nature of the individual, writing, "Authentic practical study must be based on true intellectual understanding. True listening is true study that leads to intellectual understanding."⁵⁹ According to Tada, Kaneko's position was one of "self-nature and mind-only," that "would make Shin Buddhism a philosophy of introspection or, at the very least, turn Shin Buddhism into a branch of the so-called Path of the Sages. It definitely is not something that fully grasps the true significance of the teaching of birth in the Pure Land for foolish, ordinary people."⁶⁰ Tada's criticism here is almost the same as Murakami's criticism in *Where is the True Essence of Shin Buddhism?* In general, previous scholarship has depicted the approaches of Murakami and Tada to the "Kaneko problem" as fundamentally different. Murakami is said to have ranted against Kaneko without understanding him, whereas Tada is said to have offered constructive scholarly criticism.⁶¹ However, this interpretation needs to be reconsidered based on an accurate understanding of Murakami's views expressed in *Where is the True Essence of Shin Buddhism?*, which presents criticisms very similar to Tada's.

⁵⁸ Part 2 of "Observations on Kaneko's *The Idea of the Pure Land*," *Chūgai nippō*, June 19, 1928.

⁵⁹ Part 4 of "Observations on Kaneko's *The Idea of the Pure Land*," *Chūgai nippō*, June 21, 1928.

⁶⁰ Part 5 of "Observations on Kaneko's *The Idea of the Pure Land*," *Chūgai nippō*, June 22, 1928.

⁶¹ See Kikumura 1975, p. 95; Hataya and Tatsutani 1993, p. 287.

With regard to Kaneko’s theory of the three types of Pure Land, Tada accepted Kaneko’s use of the term “idea,” which Murakami did not, and Tada does not deny Kaneko’s position that the Pure Land is pure objectivity. However, according to Tada, the Pure Land of the Idea is the shining “world of the idea of Śākyamuni Buddha,”⁶² not “our human world of the idea,” which would necessarily be a land of despair because it is based on an ordinary person’s personal realization resulting from an ordinary person’s introspection and self-reflection. Here, too, Tada denies that individual introspection or self-reflection, which he interprets as a kind of personal understanding, plays any role in religious experience. Tada says that the Pure Land as the world of the idea as perceived by the Buddha is received “not by introspection or reflection, but by listening to the true meaning of our sutras.”⁶³ This means that the actually existing Pure Land described in the sutras is not mere words from the distant past but rather an actual reality existing in every present moment. Thus, Tada believes that the Pure Land of the Idea is the actually existing Pure Land, and that only the Pure Land of the world of the idea seen from the Buddha’s perspective, which becomes manifest through listening, exists. What we have here is a disagreement between Kaneko and Tada over the term “actually existing Pure Land”—or more specifically, the expression “actually existing.” Kaneko’s understanding of “actually existing” has a dual meaning, whereas Tada’s has just one.

Tada says that Kaneko took up “this philosophy that prioritizes one’s own introspection”⁶⁴ because he was “led on by a couple of brash scholars.”⁶⁵ Who were these “couple of brash scholars”? It is helpful to look at Tada’s “Kiyozawa Manshi shi no shōgai oyobi chii” 清沢満之師の生涯及び地位 (The Life and Position of Reverend Kiyozawa Manshi, 1933). Here, Tada points out what he considers to be the fallacies of Seishinshugi, making two main points. The first is that in Kiyozawa’s thinking the Tathāgata is the God of Western philosophy or the Confucian mandate of heaven—not Amida Buddha. The second fallacy is that overcoming self power is not something that happens through the gradual development of cultivation (with all the ethical nuances contained in that term), but rather occurs in a single instant of transformative insight in hearing the teachings. Tada argues that Kiyozawa made these errors because he failed to understand that “we are not made right based on our own experience, rather it is the experience of the true Dharma that make us right.”⁶⁶ If we compare this with Tada’s criticism of Kaneko in *Chūgai nippō* above, we can see that the content of insight based on “our own experience” corresponds to “our

⁶² Part 7 of “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*,” *Chūgai nippō*, June 24, 1928.

⁶³ Part 7 of “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*,” *Chūgai nippō*, June 24, 1928.

⁶⁴ Part 8 of “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*,” *Chūgai nippō*, June 26, 1928.

⁶⁵ Part 8 of “Observations on Kaneko’s *The Idea of the Pure Land*,” *Chūgai nippō*, June 26, 1928.

⁶⁶ Tada 1977, p. 409.

human world of the idea,” while the content of the awakening in “the experience of the true Dharma” corresponds to the “world of the idea of Śākyamuni.” Tada says, “In this way, my teacher and his followers at the Kōkōdō together misunderstood the true meaning of other power and believed that the other power that they wrote about based on their own philosophical reasonings and religious sentiment was the other power of the Tathāgata’s original vow, thereby fooling themselves and misleading many others. Thus, my teacher unintentionally became a source of heterodox positions in Shin Buddhism.”⁶⁷ From this, it is not unreasonable to assume that Tada had in mind Kiyozawa, along with Soga and other followers of Kiyozawa, when he referred to “a couple of brash scholars.” If this is the case, then Tada’s criticism of Kaneko is not simply a criticism of Kaneko individually, but is also a criticism of his late teacher Kiyozawa (whom, out of deference, it was impossible to criticize directly), because it was Kaneko who inherited the tradition of Kōkōdō, which Tada himself had left.

KANEKO’S RESPONSE TO THE CRITICISMS

Kaneko’s responses to his critics begin with the statement, “This is the first time I have written a response to criticisms directed against me,” which is the opening line of Kaneko’s article “Kyōbō to naikan: Tada Kanae shi no hihyō ni taisuru benmei” 教法と内観：多田鼎氏の批評に対する弁明 (Doctrine and Introspection: A Response to the Criticisms Made by Tada Kanae), published in the journal *Butsuza* (no. 12, January 15, 1927). His responses on the pages of the *Chūgai nippō* begin with the piece entitled, “Tō no Kaneko kyōju wa donna kimochi de iru ka” 当の金子教授はどんな気持ちでいるか (“How Does Professor Kaneko Himself Feel about This?”),⁶⁸ which appeared on the second page of the June 15, 1928 issue, just days after Kaneko’s resignation from Otani University on June 12. This first article sets forth the salient points of Kaneko’s response to his critics, but since Murakami’s criticisms had also appeared in the newspaper, Kaneko responded to each of those one by one (while also taking account of Tada’s criticisms) in the first four installments of “My Shin Buddhist Studies,” which appeared in the *Chūgai nippō* between June 17 and 23. Kaneko must have known that Tada’s criticisms would also be published, since he wrote, “I looked at Dr. Murakami’s article *first*” in a note that appeared in the June 17 issue under the title “Genkō ni soete” 原稿に添えて (Along with My Article). The fifth to tenth installments of “My Shin Buddhist Studies” are primarily rebuttals of Tada’s criticisms, which began appearing in the newspaper on June 17. Two additional articles—designated as appendices to “My Shin Buddhist Studies”—provide supplementary explanations

⁶⁷ Tada 1977, p. 410.

⁶⁸ The same statement was also published in the June 22, 1928, issue of the Otani University newspaper (*Ōtani Daigaku shinbun* 大谷大学新聞).

of terms that were often misunderstood.⁶⁹ The dates of publication and full titles of Kaneko’s *Chūgai nippō* articles are as follows:

- June 15, 1928. “Tō no Kaneko kyōju wa donna kimochi de iru ka” 当の金子教授はどんな気持ちでいるか (hereafter, “How Does Professor Kaneko Himself Feel about This?”).
- June 17, 1928. “Kyōbō ni taisuru gaku no taido: Watashi no Shinshūgaku (1)” 教法に対する学の態度：私の真宗学 (一) (hereafter, “My Academic Attitude toward the Teachings [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 1]”). “Genkō ni soete” 原稿に添えて (Along with My Article).
- June 19, 1928. “Shinshūgaku no nito: Watashi no Shinshūgaku (2)” 真宗学の二途：私の真宗学 (二) (hereafter, “Two Paths of Shin Buddhist Studies [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 2]”).
- June 20, 1928. “Shūmon daigaku no shimei: Watashi no Shinshūgaku (3)” 宗門大学の使命：私の真宗学 (三) (hereafter, “The Mission of a Sectarian University [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 3]”).
- June 23, 1928. “Koshin no jōdo to saihō no jōdo, Murakami hakase ni kotau: Watashi no Shinshūgaku (4)” 己心の浄土と西方の浄土 村上博士に答ふ：私の真宗学 (四) (hereafter, “The Mind-Only Pure Land and the Pure Land of the West: My Response to Dr. Murakami [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 4]”).
- July 1, 1928. “Naikan ni yoru hōhō (jō): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (5)” 内観に依る方法 (上)：私の真宗学 (五) (The Method of Introspection, Part 1 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 5]).
- July 3, 1928. “Naikan ni yoru hōhō (ge): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (5)” 内観に依る方法 (下)：私の真宗学 (五) (hereafter, “The Method of Introspection, Part 2 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 5]”).
- July 4, 1928. “Hantai no tachiba (jō): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (6)” 反対の立場 (上)：私の真宗学 (六) (hereafter, “The Opposing Position, Part 1 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 6]”).
- July 5, 1928. “Hantai no tachiba (ge): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (6)” 反対の立場 (下)：私の真宗学 (六) (The Opposing Position, Part 2 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 6]).

⁶⁹ The issue of *Butsuza* that was published on July 1, 1928 (no. 31) and that Kaneko donated to the university in commemoration of his resignation contains two articles with content that overlaps with “My Shin Buddhist Studies”: “Shinshūgaku no gainen: ‘Kyōgyōshinshō’ o yomite (28) 真宗学の概念：『教行信証』を讀みて (28) (The Concept of Shin Buddhist Studies: Reading the *Kyōgyōshinshō* [28])” and “Senpai no gakuge” 先輩の学解 (Study for Intellectual Understanding for My Senior Colleague).

- July 6, 1928. “Denshō to koshō (jō): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (7)” 伝承と己証 (上) : 私の真宗学 (七) (“Transmitted Dharma and Individual Realization, Part 1 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 7]”).
- July 7, 1928. “Denshō to koshō (ge): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (7)” 伝承と己証 (下) : 私の真宗学 (七) (hereafter, “Transmitted Dharma and Individual Realization, Part 2 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, 7]”).
- July 11, 1928. “Ni san no hoi (jō): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (fu)” 二三の補遺 (上) : 私の真宗学 (附) (hereafter, “A Few Addenda, Part 1 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, Appendix]”).
- July 12, 1928. “Ni san no hoi (ge): Watashi no Shinshūgaku (fu)” 二三の補遺 (下) : 私の真宗学 (附) (hereafter, “A Few Addenda, Part 2 [My Shin Buddhist Studies, Appendix]”).

In the following, I will introduce Kaneko’s specific responses to the criticisms made by Murakami and Tada. I will divide Kaneko’s responses into three categories and briefly describe them.

Respect for Shin Buddhist Doctrine

In “How Does Professor Kaneko Himself Feel about This?” and in the first installment of “My Shin Buddhist Studies” entitled “My Academic Attitude toward the Teachings,” Kaneko writes that his research “is about trying to understand [the teachings] correctly,” so that itself is a sign that he respects the teachings. Furthermore, in the second installment, “Two Paths for Shin Buddhist Studies,” Kaneko states that unlike academic research in general, which simply accepts the results of previous academic research exactly as it is, his work is based on an “academic spirit” that both respects previous advancements, but also has the potential to develop further, awaiting future developments when necessary. He holds that he will surely receive something from his “academic attitude that seeks to understand things for myself as much as possible”⁷⁰ because “the Shin Buddhist teachings are an inexhaustible treasury of the Dharma.”⁷¹ This is an attempt to admit the possibility of independent research in Shin Buddhist studies as a counterargument to Murakami (and Tada). In “The Mission of a Sectarian University,” Kaneko explains the reason that he takes this attitude toward the teachings. He writes that Shinran “has a universal significance that can be understood by anyone who has reason founded in religious seeking.”⁷² Kaneko writes that he has

⁷⁰ See Murayama 2013, p. 121.

⁷¹ See Murayama 2013, p. 122.

⁷² See Murayama 2013, p. 122.

always believed that “the truth belongs to all sentient beings”⁷³ and his ultimate goal is to make Shinran’s philosophy intelligible to all people, including himself. Kaneko’s scholarly attitude is, on the one hand, oriented toward his own rational self—as if he could not understand things otherwise—and, on the other hand, oriented toward his relationship with other people or with the public, based on his responsibility as a researcher, a promoter of the Dharma, and a representative of ordinary people, meaning that he could not explain it to others unless he himself could understand it.⁷⁴

Kaneko also defends himself against Murakami’s accusations that (1) he had disrespected Shinran by not calling him “Saint Shinran,” and (2) he denied the significance of the teaching that the Pure Land exists in a designated direction with specific form and asserted that it exists only in people’s minds, both of which Murakami says are evidence that he had disregarded the Shin doctrinal classification system. First, concerning the accusation that referring to Shinran without the honorific title “Saint” is disrespectful, in “A Few Addenda, Part 1,” Kaneko writes that “although ‘Saint’ is an honorific, using the term ‘Shinran’ alone is not disrespectful,”⁷⁵ arguing that the use of the term “Saint” is appropriate when calling to mind one’s relationship to him as a member of the sect that he has founded or as disciples following his spiritual guidance, but when writing as a person in the same religious frame of mind, or when addressing him as an object of scholarly inquiry, it is more respectful to call him Shinran.

Concerning the criticism that he denied the significance of the teaching that the Pure Land exists in a designated direction with specific form, Kaneko explained his position in “How Does Professor Kaneko Himself Feel about This?” and in “The Mind-Only Pure Land and the Pure Land of the West: A Reply to Dr. Murakami.” Here, Kaneko says that he had written that “the Pure Land as an actual reality is not something that can be believed” in order to distinguish “actual existence based on the teachings” (or “the idea of actual existence as shown by the teachings”) from “actual existence based on common sense” (or “a view [or conception] of actual existence based on a commonsensical viewpoint”).⁷⁶ The latter “common sense” is a naively literal belief in the Pure Land, a position that Kaneko did not accept. This naive belief in the Pure Land produced, as a reaction, the “modern commonsensical view that ignores the actual existence of the Tathāgatha and the Pure Land,”⁷⁷ which had been set forth

⁷³ Kaneko 1943, p. 55.

⁷⁴ Kaneko says that he learned the “way of thinking” (probably derived from Kant’s “Denkungsart”) or “academic style” that turns toward others through this sort of self-reflection from Kiyozawa, and that because of his inheritance of this stance, he is a member of the “Kiyozawa faction.” Kaneko 1975, p. 8.

⁷⁵ See Murayama 2013, p. 132.

⁷⁶ See Murayama 2013, p. 117.

⁷⁷ See Murayama 2013, p. 117.

by people like Nonomura, and thereby threatened the idea of the actual existence of the Pure Land indicated in the teachings. Kaneko himself does not believe in the literal existence of the Pure Land, but at the same time he is also not convinced that all the populace from the Edo period onward believed in the Pure Land in a common sense way, either. He writes: “It is rather dangerous to assume that people in the past really believed that the Pure Land existed in the western direction. In the sensibilities of old men and women who say that they chant the *nenbutsu* 念仏 and will go to the Pure Land, perhaps nine among ten of them are thinking in terms of a map of the universe. . . . The more serious older folks who come to temples do not think of the Pure Land as a place with some strange sparkling gold, silver, and lapis lazuli.”⁷⁸ Tamura Enchō 田村圓澄 (1917–2013) argued that the so-called good men and good women (i.e., virtuous laypeople) actually did believe in the literal reality of the Pure Land, so Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land did not “directly target the farmers” and therefore “did not advocate the emancipation of the peasantry from the feudal system”⁷⁹—a rather forced criticism of Kaneko, in my opinion. We have already seen that Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land was born from the demand of the times to ascribe a meaningful reality to the Pure Land that was not a simplistic acceptance of its actual existence. However, according to Kaneko himself, he was not only following the currents of his time but also using new terms to reaffirm the original meaning of the reality of the traditional concept of the Pure Land. Kaneko argues that in this sense, his own view of the Pure Land did indeed account for the significance of the teaching of the existence of the Pure Land in a specific direction and with set form. “I believe that ‘designating a direction and setting forth specific forms’ does not refer to commonsensical existence. . . . It is only because of this teaching that we can transcend commonsensical existence . . . and aspire to birth in the Pure Land as a higher reality.”⁸⁰ In “My Shin Buddhist Studies,” in order to avoid confusion, Kaneko used expressions such as “idea” or “a priori” sparingly, but here what he refers to as the Pure Land that “transcends commonsensical existence” is the same as the “Pure Land of the Idea” as described in *The Idea of the Pure Land*, and “a higher reality” refers to an a priori reality.

With regard to the criticism that affirming the Pure Land of the Idea is tantamount to asserting that the Pure Land exists only in people’s minds, while acknowledging that his discussion of the Pure Land of a specific direction and with set form as becoming clear through introspection “might give the appearance of a mind-only Pure Land,” in “A Few Addenda, Part 1,” Kaneko states that he uses the word “idea” (*kannen* 觀念) in the philosophical sense of *Idee*. It is “something purely objective that is the object of

⁷⁸ Kaneko 1925b, pp. 31–32. Translation based on Conway forthcoming.

⁷⁹ Tamura 1954, p. 206.

⁸⁰ See Murayama 2013, p. 118.

reason” and “dispels all shadows of individual subjectivity.”⁸¹ Kant described the element of pure subjectivity that transcends the individual and remains valid for all other subjectivities as transcendental (a priori), and here Kaneko is following Kant’s example.

The Mission of a Sectarian University

In “The Mission of Sectarian University,” Kaneko clarifies that his attitude as a researcher on Shin Buddhism is based on his awareness of himself as a member of a Shin Buddhist university. Here, he writes that the mission of a Shin Buddhist university is to make the teachings of Shin Buddhism known to the public through scholarship, and, when this mission is fulfilled, a Shin Buddhist university will have social value. Thus, “the mission of a Shin Buddhist university is not for the sake of the visible denomination, but for the invisible denomination.”⁸² The “invisible denomination” here can be expressed as “the denomination of the idea.” Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land was connected to the need for spiritual reform of the denomination, and it included a theory of the denomination that could explain the underlying principles for the organization. Earlier, Kiyozawa, in his movement to reform Shin Buddhism through the Shirakawa 白川 Coterie, stated that “the Ōtani branch of Shin Buddhism exists where the religious spirit of the Ōtani branch resides.”⁸³ Kaneko’s word “idea” resonates with Kiyozawa’s earlier use of the word “spirit.” At the time that Kaneko was writing about the significance of the university for the invisible denomination, he had already been forced to leave the university and was also aware that he might have to leave the priesthood, which makes this piece seem to be an expression of considerable determination on his part. At any rate, it goes without saying that this theory of a Shin Buddhist (or any sectarian) university is a response to Murakami’s endorsement of restrictions on academic freedom in sectarian schools.

The Conflation of Philosophy and Religion

The issue of Kaneko’s conflation of religion and philosophy was the crux of Murakami’s and Tada’s attacks on Kaneko, the core criticism from which the other issues they raised derived. Murakami accused Kaneko of confusing philosophy with religion, which resulted in losing sight of the distinctive features of Shin Buddhism. For his part, Tada argued that Kaneko’s method of philosophical introspection was laced with “personal understanding,” resulting in a confusion between “our human world of the idea” and “the world of the idea of Śākyamuni.” Kaneko’s defense against these criticisms can be

⁸¹ See Murayama 2013, p. 133.

⁸² See Murayama 2013, p. 123.

⁸³ KMZI 7: 103.

summed up in one phrase: introspection is indispensable to respecting the teachings. Let us take a look at some of his responses in the seventh to tenth installments of “My Shin Buddhist Studies”—the four articles from “The Opposing Position, Part 1” to “Transmitted Dharma and Individual Realization, Part 2.” Tada makes a sharp distinction between Śākyamuni’s perspective and our own, but for Kaneko, basing himself on introspection, there is no essential difference between “Śākyamuni’s wisdom” and “my own awakening” insofar as they are both manifestations of *self-awareness*, although there is a difference in degree—and Kaneko stresses this difference in degree. Kaneko holds that when it comes to self-awareness, we can only stand in “our own” position. This being the case, he asks how Tada can claim to know things from the perspective of Śākyamuni. Kaneko argues that this is because Tada, in spite of being one of us deluded human beings who take Śākyamuni as an object of cognition, mixes in his own erroneous personal understanding, mistaking “our” position for Śākyamuni’s position—or else in some places, confusing himself and Śākyamuni, taking himself to be the Śākyamuni of the “present moment.” Thus, from Kaneko’s point of view, it is none other than Tada who has mixed in his own personal understanding and discursive thinking.

Tada rejected introspection and said that the only way to hear the teachings was through passive listening. Kaneko responds, “At the limits of my introspective contemplation of my inner life, I always sense the profound reverberations of the teachings of Shin Buddhism”⁸⁴ and “touching one part of them eventually leads to being moved by the whole.”⁸⁵ In other words, the only way to hear the teachings is by “sensing” their “reverberations” in this kind of introspection. The expressions “moved by” or “deeply impressed by” refer to a reverberation in the heart, indicating a passive sensation or emotional reaction. Kaneko writes, “The truth of the teachings reverberates only in the heart of introspection. In other words, for those who adopt an attitude of introspection, it is none other than the true words of the Buddha that reveal the truth of that stance.”⁸⁶ It is said that Kaneko had a hearing impairment.⁸⁷ That difficulty may have been a factor, but clearly Kaneko has an acute sensitivity that sets great value on sound, in spite of our tendency to focus on the visual in our daily lives. Generally speaking, Kaneko lays great emphasis on the sensory content of the five senses, but his stress on the auditory aspect is particularly one of the unique features of his understanding of the Pure Land.⁸⁸ This emphasis on the auditory aspect in introspection is developed

⁸⁴ “The Method of Introspection, Part 2” in *Chūgai nippō*, July 3, 1928. See Murayama 2013, p. 126.

⁸⁵ “A Few Addenda, Part 2” in *Chūgai nippō*, July 12, 1928. See Murayama 2013, p. 134.

⁸⁶ Kaneko 1966, p. 103.

⁸⁷ See Kikumura 1976, p. 57.

⁸⁸ Kaneko’s father is said to have been a master of the traditional Japanese flute and the *hichiriki* 篳篥, a double-reeded flute with a high-pitched sound (Katō 1978, p. 18).

in works such as *The World of the Other Shore*, where he describes the Pure Land as a world of music, or world of pure auditory perception, in addition to presenting the more traditional view of the Pure Land as a world of light, or pure visual perception. This sort of theory of the “musical nature of the Pure Land” is unique to Kaneko’s thought.⁸⁹

Kaneko writes as follows: “In my Shin Buddhist studies, I try to understand the teachings, with myself as one ordinary person representing the inner needs of the populace. In Tada’s Shin Buddhist studies, he explains the teachings to ordinary people, with himself acting as a ‘good teacher’ (*zenjishiki* 善知識).”⁹⁰ Here Kaneko is able to speak of himself as being one of “the populace” because his awareness of being an ordinary person develops through introspection. For Kaneko, introspection is the “introspection of transgressions and hindrances,”⁹¹ and his pure Shin Buddhist studies, based on this introspection, is precisely the study of “the religion of the entangled masses” (or the “religion of the masses”).⁹² Kaneko comes to describe his method of introspection as “listening to and reflecting on the teachings,” wherein “one considers what one has heard and applies it to one’s entire being.”⁹³ He says, “The Shin Buddhist studies which I aspire to realize aims to conceptualize, based on the logic of self-awareness, the experience of aspiring for birth in the west by awakening to the transgressions and hindrances within one’s own mind and coming to know the transgressions and hindrances within one’s own mind by aspiring for birth in the west.”⁹⁴ This is a rebuttal to Murakami’s criticism that Kaneko negated the essential characteristic of Shin Buddhism (i.e., its orientation toward ordinary people) by introducing the philosophical method of introspection. In other words, Kaneko is saying that Murakami should be criticizing Tada, not him.

CONCLUSION: SOME REMAINING PROBLEMS

Reading the exchanges among the three writers reveals a failure to communicate throughout the discussions, with both sides misinterpreting the other. Murakami and Tada focus their criticisms of Kaneko on his method of introspection, but they themselves lack sufficient understanding of introspection. Even Tada, who is usually credited with offering constructive criticism, does not correctly grasp Kaneko’s concept of

⁸⁹ See also Kikumura 1975, pp. 7, 9; Hataya and Tatsutani 1993, p. 311.

⁹⁰ “Transmitted Dharma and Individual Realization, Part 2,” in *Chūgai nippō*, July 7, 1928. See Murayama 2013, p. 131.

⁹¹ “A Few Addenda, Part 2” in *Chūgai nippō*, July 12, 1928. See Murayama 2013, p. 134.

⁹² Kaneko 1975, p. 93.

⁹³ Kaneko 1956, p. 275.

⁹⁴ “The Mind-Only Pure Land and the Pure Land of the West: My Response to Dr. Murakami,” in *Chūgai nippō*, June 23, 1928. See Murayama 2013, p. 124.

introspection. From my perspective, Kaneko's ideas about the Pure Land have a unique significance in the history of Pure Land thought in modern Japan. I would say that critics have no right to misunderstand others' ideas and attribute their own mistakes to them, much less to try to make others responsible for their own misunderstandings. On the other hand, it is also true that if we evaluate "My Shin Buddhist Studies," which was written at a tumultuous time for Kaneko, today after the passage of over nine decades, it is clear that Kaneko's method of introspective reflection had ambiguities that inevitably led to misunderstandings because this was an early stage of Kaneko's thought, where his understanding of the Pure Land was just beginning to take shape. In many of his articles, Kaneko pledges to purify his Shin Buddhist studies and to devote himself to making his approach more generally acceptable. Lastly, I would like to conclude this article by briefly summarizing some of the problems I see in Kaneko's Pure Land thought.

Problems with the Structure of Introspection

In his notes for lectures that he gave at Kyoto University in 1925 and 1926 ("A History of Buddhist Ethical Thought"), Watsuji Tetsurō 和辻哲郎 (1889–1960) described why he, a non-specialist in Buddhism, chose to take up the study of Buddhism. He writes, "Buddhism has not been liberated from the church and there is no history of Buddhist philosophy. . . . Category 2: Propagation of sectarian positions. Kaneko Daiei et al. have no method (*Methode*). Not scholarly."⁹⁵ Given that Watsuji is criticizing Kaneko's method, it is highly likely that Watsuji had read *Prolegomena to Shin Buddhist Studies*, but we do not know this for sure. In any event, Watsuji's comment on Kaneko was scathing. But precisely since Watsuji was not a specialist in Buddhism, he could unhesitatingly identify the problems with Kaneko's scholarly method. Given what Kaneko aimed to achieve with his presentation of Shin Buddhist studies, Watsuji's criticisms cannot just be ignored.

Despite Kaneko's attempts at explanation in his repeated responses to the criticisms directed at him, it is not easy to understand the structure of Kaneko's concept of introspection. Kaneko's essays have a unique format, which cannot be found in any other field of academic study, such that his articles (even the ones that were not originally lectures) and the transcripts of his lectures are scarcely distinguishable, except for some slight variations in tone (the same can be said for Soga). It is not easy to extract Kaneko's true intention from his writings, because they are filled with subtly changing terminology and almost no annotation. Nevertheless, if we look at other works by Kaneko, aside from the two that were the focus of his critics, and attempt to grasp the overall structure of what he calls introspection, then we can see that, as I pointed

⁹⁵ Watsuji 1963, pp. 384–85.

out above, on the whole it is made up of “sensations” or “emotional reactions.” If we describe the function of those intermittently repeated “sensations” or “reactions” using a spatial metaphor, they can be said to be multilayered. Setting aside the question of whether this multilayeredness should be seen as one of depth or progressive development, Kaneko clearly posits movement within a hierarchical structure, from impure to pure sensation. Impure sensation takes the form of being unaware that one is a foolish, ordinary person, while pure sensation takes the opposite form, awareness that one is a foolish, ordinary person. The subjective awareness of oneself as an ordinary person brings about the pure perception of the Pure Land of the Idea as pure objectivity. The first thing that can be said here is that even though Kaneko uses the word “sensation” to emphasize the passive nature of this experience, it is impossible to describe such an experience without including the sense that each occurrence of self-reflection that happens in introspection does in fact take place as a cognitive function of an active individual. This problem—that the self is active, not passive, in Kaneko’s introspection—is the reason why Murakami and Tada criticized Kaneko’s introspection as being like the Path of the Sages (i.e., not Pure Land Buddhism) or as being philosophical, not religious, reflection.

Second, if impure sensation is the unawareness of being an ordinary person while pure sensation is the awareness of being an ordinary person, then even if introspection is “introspection of transgressions and hindrances,” the overall structure of introspection, which proceeds in an asymptotic curve from lower values (unawareness) to higher values (self-awareness), will necessarily become colored with nuances of the need to conform to ethical standards or engage in spiritual cultivation to reach those higher values. This way of thinking was a natural conclusion for Kiyozawa, who had studied Hegel’s philosophy—which teaches that the spirit, as a form of reason, has a progressive nature that drives self-development—from Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and held that the “essential feature” of Seishinshugi was “a focus on introspection.”⁹⁶ But from the standpoint of other-power religion, which takes a cautious attitude toward the individual subject’s capacity for self-determination and autonomy, the ethical expectations placed on the individual in that sort of a stance becomes a stumbling block that cannot be overlooked. This is what led to the criticism that Kaneko’s introspection was too much like the Path of the Sages or was too philosophical. This problem was also the reason why Tada criticized Kiyozawa’s Seishinshugi as a system of thought that advocated self-cultivation. Tada believed that the transformation of the human psychological makeup that leads to faith does not occur through a process of gradual self-cultivation, but instead is an instantaneous shift in values that occurs as a “sideways leap” (*ōchō* 横超), or in a way that transcends the conventional steps toward awakening.

⁹⁶ KMZI 6: 97.

Third, as Kaneko pointed out,⁹⁷ if the terminology of Western philosophy itself—self, self-reflection, etc.—is emblematic of self-power thought and should be avoided by an other-power religion, then the problem becomes even more complicated for those who use the terminology of Western philosophy, especially Kant's. Kaneko's method of introspection starts from "a standpoint that seeks to understand somehow or other,"⁹⁸ which means one must maintain an attitude of self-reflection until one comes to understand things for oneself. Soga also adopted this type of method that emphasizes "self-awareness and self-realization," but in Shin Buddhist studies such a method is complicated by the fact that it may come too close to a self-power position.

The Problem of the Existence of the Pure Land

Because the structure of introspection is unclear in Kaneko's thought, the content of introspection and the object of introspection end up being obscure as well. Kaneko thought that the object of impure sensation (experiential objectivity) and the object of pure sensation (pure objectivity) have entirely different modes of existence. The latter mode of existence is also described as "a priori," but it is difficult to understand what Kaneko means by a priori reading just the two works by Kaneko that were the subject of controversy. Therefore, we need to look at *The World of the Other Shore* (1925a), *Issues concerning the Pure Land* (1968), and *Kiyozawa sensei no sekai: Kiyozawa Manshi no shisō to shinnen ni tsuite* 清沢先生の世界：清沢満之の思想と信念について (The World of Professor Kiyozawa: The Thought and Belief of Kiyozawa Manshi, 1975) to get a fuller picture of what he is trying to say.⁹⁹ Moreover, Kaneko's terminology, such as "pure" and "a priori," is based on Kant's terminology, so a knowledge of Kant's philosophy is necessary to understand Kaneko. Kaneko, like his teacher Kiyozawa, intentionally used Western philosophical terms, thinking that Western philosophy would make Pure Land thought more understandable to educated people of the middle class. However, this use of terminology from Western philosophy is actually the reason why Kaneko's writing has a bad reputation as being difficult to understand. Apparently, Kiyozawa's Dharma talks were so difficult that even his followers did not understand

⁹⁷ Kaneko 1927, p. 29. This article is reprinted in Murayama 2013.

⁹⁸ Kaneko 1926, p. 12.

⁹⁹ Although his ideas are not as clearly articulated as they are in *The Idea of the Pure Land*, it is also useful, among his early works, to refer to "Shūkyō no senkensei: zai Doku no Kiba ani ni yosu" 宗教の先験性：在独の木場兄に寄す (The A Priori Nature of Religion: To My Brother Kiba in Germany), where he tries to analyze the relationship between knowledge and faith as the relationship between empirical knowledge and a priori transcendental knowledge: "I believe that what Shinran described in the *Kyōgyōshinshō* as the original vow being the centerpiece and the name being the essence is truly a clarification of the a priori nature of religion" (Kaneko 1922, pp. 70–71).

them very well.¹⁰⁰ And Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land contains vocabulary unfamiliar even to Shin Buddhist scholars.

Based on Kant, Kaneko holds that the experiential is individual (or subjective) while the pure or a priori are both individual and supra-individual. Since he believes that understanding Amida and the Pure Land to be simply elements of one’s individual mind or body belongs to the level of the individual, he argues that the Pure Land of the Idea, which is held to be a priori and supra-individual, transcends such an understanding. In that sense, the Pure Land of the Idea, which is described as a priori, has a higher mode of existence than the experiential. But there are two problems with this stance of Kaneko’s. First, even in Kant, the term “transcendental” (a priori) is used in two different ways: epistemologically, “the transcendental as a constitutive principle” (*das konstitutive Prinzip*), which makes experiential cognition (or experience) possible, and “the transcendental as a regulative principle” (*das regulative Prinzip*), which both indirectly enables experience and also can be said to have an orientation toward teleology. It is difficult to tell which of these two senses Kaneko intends when he says that the Pure Land is a priori objectivity. Since Kaneko describes the Pure Land as an *Idee*, he is probably thinking of it not as a constitutive principle that makes individual experiences possible, but as a regulative principle that regulates our lives as the totality of individual experiences. This is not, however, easily understood from the two works that were the subject of this controversy. If we read these two works carefully, we can see that they contain the germ of Kaneko’s theory of the Pure Land, which he later develops. In that sense, his theory of the Pure Land remained essentially unchanged, but, at the stage considered here, his explanation of the a priori reality of the Pure Land had not yet matured.

The second problem is that there is a subtle relationship between the a priori and the idea that Amida and the Pure Land exist simply as one’s own mind or body. While Kaneko continues Kiyozawa’s focus on experience, he expands the scope of experience to include not only the direct experiences that Kiyozawa considered but also a priori content—which Kiyozawa often mentioned but did not clarify. Kaneko says, “Professor Kiyozawa said, ‘I haven’t experienced [the Pure Land].’ . . . [But] I think we can say that it was the a priori basis for his experience, although he had not experienced it. I am using Kant’s terminology, but experience must be preceded by something that is prior to experience. Without something existing a priori, experience is not possible. In any event, the Pure Land first precedes our experience, or, to use terms we are used to using, it is in a higher dimension, and if it is something of a higher dimension, then it is a priori. . . . Without the Pure Land, the various problems of this world cannot

¹⁰⁰ “When he preaches a sermon, it is too difficult to understand, and the audience leaves” (Nishimura 1951, p. 213).

be resolved.”¹⁰¹ Although Kaneko believes that he has responded to the criticism that he holds the Pure Land to be simply an element of one’s individual mind or body by arguing it exists a priori, what he describes as a priori is also an object of human cognition, and the a priori Pure Land of the Idea is also a subjective fact. He says, “Those who hear that religion is a subjective fact and think that means it is insignificant are probably equating a subjective fact with an individual fact. However, a subjective fact is not necessarily an individual fact. The fact that when we talk with each other about our spiritual lives, we are able share the same intuitions and realizations shows that it’s clearly more than just an individual fact, or a fact that is only true for that one individual.”¹⁰² So, if we take “the Pure Land as existing in one’s own mind alone” to mean “*nothing more than* an individual mental fact,” then Kaneko’s concept of the Pure Land cannot be criticized as taking that stance. But if “the Pure Land as existing in one’s own mind alone” is taken to mean “an individual mental fact” then Kaneko’s understanding of the Pure Land does indeed take the position that the Pure Land exists only in one’s mind.

The Problem with the Word “Idea”

The use of the word “idea” seems to have caused some confusion. The first problem is that the word “idea” (*kannen* 觀念) is polysemous. “Idea” can be used to mean “concept,” that is, “comprehensive significance.” But “idea” can also be used in a negative sense, meaning “empty,” “unreal,” or “without substance.” In contrast to these two common usages, Kaneko uses “idea” with a meaning that is derived from Kant’s *Idee*. This, together with Kaneko’s discussion of three types of Pure Land (the Pure Land of the Idea, the Pure Land of the Realization of an Ideal, and the Pure Land of Actual Existence), gave rise to the misunderstanding that the Pure Land of the Idea has no reality, that it is not real for us.

The next problem is that even Kaneko himself sometimes confuses “idea” (*kannen*) and “ideal” (*risō* 理想). The German word *Idee* is often translated as *rinen* 理念 (ideal, idea, principle) and sometimes as *risō* 理想 (ideal), so the Pure Land of the Idea could also have been described as the Pure Land of the Ideal. In fact, Kaneko often presents the Pure Land of the Idea as an ideal: “The Pure Land is the land of light as the eternal ideal.”¹⁰³ However, this makes it difficult for the reader to know whether, among the three types of Pure Lands, it is the Pure Land of the Idea or the Pure Land as an Ideal that Kaneko is emphasizing. He realized this problem, and in subsequent publications he tried, as much as possible, to explain the Pure Land without using the word “idea”

¹⁰¹ Kaneko 1975, p. 85.

¹⁰² Kaneko 1928, p. 23.

¹⁰³ Kaneko 1926, p. 33.

(*kannen*). In his later years, after clearly recognizing that the word “ideal” (*risō*) has two meanings, he purposefully used that word¹⁰⁴ exclusively. If Kaneko had used the word *rinēn* 理念, which is closer to Kant’s meaning, he might have expressed his division of the three types of Pure Lands differently: (1) the Pure Land of the Idea could have been the “Pure Land as an unattainable ideal (*rinēn* 理念),” (2) the Pure Land as an Ideal as the “Pure Land as an attainable ideal (*rinēn* 理念),” and (3) the Pure Land of Actual Existence as the “Pure Land as an empirical object.” However, it seems that Kaneko was more comfortable with the words *kannen* (idea) and *risō* (ideal) than with *rinēn* (ideal).¹⁰⁵

(Translated by Elizabeth Kenney and Michael Conway)

ABBREVIATIONS

- CWS *The Collected Works of Shinran*. 2 vols. Translated by Dennis Hirota, Hisao Inagaki, Michio Tokunaga, and Ryushin Uryuzu. Kyoto: Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha, 1997.
- KMZI *Kiyozawa Manshi zenshū* 清沢満之全集. 9 vols. Edited by Otani University. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002–3.
- SRS *Soga Ryōjin senshū* 曾我量深選集. 12 vols. Tokyo: Yayoi Shobō, 1970–72.
- TK *Teihon Kyōgyōshinshō* 定本教行信証. Edited by Shinran Shōnin Zenshū Kankōkai 親鸞聖人全集刊行会. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1989.

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¹⁰⁴ In addition to “ideal” (*risō*), there are examples of his use of terms such as “essence” (*honshitsu* 本質; Kaneko 1922, p. 1), “dream” (*yume* 夢; Kaneko 1946a, p. 94), “symbol” (*shōchō* 象徴; Kaneko 1962, vol. 2, p. 127), and “image” (*sōzō* 想像, or *imēji* イメージ; Kaneko 1968, p. 273).

¹⁰⁵ See Murayama 2012, n. 16.

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