

The Vow as the One Buddha-Vehicle

—Buddha and Māra—

KAZUMARO KANBE

The Buddha is said to have achieved awakening when he vanquished a host of Māras in a single instant of thought. This article attempts to define what Māra means in this context, and how the Buddha's awakening was understood within history.

The first chapter “Nominal Monk without Precepts” treats how the Buddha-way defined in terms of the Three Disciplines of *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā*, was redefined by Honen and Shinran through their own understanding of themselves as a “nominal monk without precepts” or as “bald and foolish person.” This shows how the Buddhist view of history developed from that based on the idea of *Maṃpo* (Latter Dharma) to that based on the Original Vows.

The second chapter “The Buddha-way as Revealed by the Selected Original Vow”, focuses on “Buddha-nature” (the awakening to the Buddha) and “*icchāntika*”. I have taken up here Honen's interpretation of the Buddha-way as revealed by the Name of the Original Vow and his insistence on the independence of Pure Land Buddhism from other sects.

The third chapter “The Vow as the One Buddha-Vehicle” treats how Shinran, in transmitting Honen's teachings, saw the history of

Mahāyāna Buddhism from the standpoint of the Original Vows. By considering the reason why he quoted the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* in the second chapter on “Practice” and fifth chapter on “True Buddha and Land” in the *Kyogyoshinsho*, I take up the following questions: namely, why does the Buddha not realize enlightenment, and how does the receptivity to the realization of supreme enlightenment manifest itself in living beings?

The fourth chapter “True Disciple of the Buddha—The criticism of the provisional and the false”, takes up how a disciple of the Buddha lives a life of “Vow as the One Buddha-Vehicle.” Here I treat the question of how the awakening to the Name of the Original Vow (that is, taking refuge in the Buddha) which is the realization of supreme enlightenment surpassing Māra, is described in the sixth chapter “Transformed Buddha and Land” in the *Kyogyoshinsho*.