Rethinking *Kaikyō* (Overseas Propagation of Japanese Buddhism): Integrating Perspectives from Both Sides

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KAIKYŌ 開教 is a contested term. First of all, it relates Japanese Buddhism to the colonization during the period from the late nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth century. Previously, scholars demonstrated the missionary activities of Japanese Buddhist organizations on the Asian continent where they had subjugated Koreans and Chinese; Hokkaidō and Japan's neighboring islands where they had discriminated against the indigenous people such as the Ainu; and in North America where the Buddhist clergy had competed with Christians. Second, the term implies hermeneutical concerns. Especially in the case of the Jōdoshinshū tradition, Shin Buddhism, who was supposed to "open up" Shinran's teaching, and to whom was it propagated? If it had been up to the Shin Buddhist clergy to initiate the propagation and "convert" people in a foreign land, wouldn't this act have been considered self-power (*jiriki* 自力)? If it had been to represent the Dharma activities of Amida Buddha, then to what degree and in what way, would the clergy have been responsible for the propagation? Therefore, *kaikyō* is generally considered a term associated with institutional practice and is viewed as overseas propagation led by a particular Buddhist denomination.[1]

Since the system of *kaikyō* took on a life of its own in the United States as the result of the so-called "eastward transmission of Buddhism" (*bukkyō*

[1] It must be noted that Buddhist orders used other terms such as *fukyō* 布教 and *gukyō* 弘教 in their early propagation interchangeably with *kaikyō*. *Kaikyō* was also employed for the Shin Buddhist propagation in Kagoshima, Okinoshima, etc. Today, both Nishi and Higashi Honganji use the term for their propagation in major cities such as Tokyo, namely *toshi kaikyō* 都市開教.

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tōzen 仏教東漸), Buddhism became one of the cultural assets exchanged between the two countries. James Ketelaar and Judith Snodgrass both studied the significance of the historical and doctrinal roles played by the Japanese Buddhist delegates who had attended the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893, and how American intellectuals had viewed Japanese Buddhism at that time.[2] In the late 1990s, Charles Prebish and Kenneth Tanaka published a collection of articles entitled *The Faces of Buddhism in America*, which included "Shin Buddhism in America: A Social Perspective" by Alfred Bloom, "Japanese Zen in America: Americanizing the Face in the Mirror" by Victor Hori, "Nichiren Shōshū and Soka Gakkai in America: The Pioneer Spirit" by Jane Hurst.[3] Richard Seager also published *Buddhism in America* in 1999 and narrated brief histories of Japanese Buddhism as part of the major Buddhist traditions in the United States.[4] These scholars delved into issues involving the adaptation of an ethnic Buddhism in the United States, such as the Americanization of Buddhist practice, and the democratization and social engagement of Buddhism. Yet, it must be noted that Asian Americanists are generally interested in the study of their religions in relation to the analyses of race, ethnicity, gender, politics, etc. This gap can by no means be bridged by Japanese scholars, who have a tendency to investigate the topic of *kaikyō* simply by focusing on a particular denomination as *the* primary concern of their study. Based on organizational records, they discuss the styles of propagation, make biographical accounts of particular Buddhist ministers, or identify historical facts related to their denomination's overseas expansion.[5] Such scholarship is useful for historicizing and envisioning a denomination's activities, but it does not intersect with Religious Studies or Asian American Studies.

Based on the given organizational history and existing studies, this paper makes a modest effort to situate the early denominational history of Japanese Buddhism (*kaikyōshi* 開教史) in the context of its boundary actions within the host society. According to Tony Carnes and Fenggang Yang, Asian American religious orders promoted boundary actions through socioeconomic services, recreation, education, legal settlements, and political

[2] Ketelaar 1990 and Snodgrass 2003.

[3] Prebish and Tanaka 1998.

[4] Seager 1999.

[5] For instance, Takeda 1996. In 2004, Duncan Williams and Moriya Tomoe organized a conference entitled "Issei Buddhism" at the University of California, Irvine. On that occasion, scholars from Jōdoshū, Jōdoshinshū, Sōtōshū, and Nichirenshū gave presentations on the history of their own denominations' propagation in the United States.

operations.[6] Based on their definition, this study designates Japanese Buddhism as one of several ethnic social forces that integrates and regulates the immigrants' personal and social lives. As a case in point, this article investigates a brief history of the Jōdoshinshū Nishi Hongwanji denomination in the United States, focusing on the period between 1898 and the 1920s during which time Shin Buddhist immigrants from Japan (first generation of Japanese ancestry, known as Issei) dominated Buddhist missions/churches.[7] While there has been a great deal of study carried out on second-generation Japanese American Buddhists (Nisei),[8] the lives of Issei Buddhists still remain hardly known, except for the prevailing stereotype that they were hardworking and instrumental to the foundation of Japanese American Buddhism. This article sheds light on some of their activities through unexplored Buddhist journals published in Hawaii and on the mainland during that period.

As stated above, Jōdoshinshū developed as the largest form of Japanese ethnic Buddhism in North America during the first half of the twentieth century. In 1898, Nishi Hongwanji endorsed its propagation in Hawaii by sending Satomi Hōni 里見法爾 (1853–1922) as its first superintendent (*kantoku* 監督).[9] It also dispatched two ministers, Sonoda Shūe 薗田宗惠 (1863–1922), as the first superintendent, and Nishijima Kakuryō 西島覺了 (1873–1942), to San Francisco in 1899, which marked Nishi Hongwanji's beginnings of propagation on mainland United States.[10] By the 1910s, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii had built more than thirty branch missions (*fukyōjo* 布教場) throughout the Hawaiian Islands. On the mainland, the Buddhist Mission of North America (today known as the Buddhist Churches of America) had established churches (*bukkyōkai* 仏教会) in major Californian cities, which contained large numbers of Issei and Nisei, and had expanded its operations to include the states of Washington, Utah and Arizona. The Buddhist Mission of North America built the first Shin Buddhist church in

[6] Carnes and Yang 2004, p. 13. Carnes and Yang include one more category, i.e., health-oriented resources. But since it is difficult to find such services offered by Shin Buddhist organizations, this category is ignored in this paper.

[7] For the choice of words related to the Shin Buddhist orders in North America, I follow the nomenclature of the Buddhist "missions" in Hawaii and that of the Buddhist "churches" on the mainland.

[8] For instance, David Yoo (2000) introduces Nisei Buddhist activities in his discussion of the formation of the Japanese American subculture.

[9] Centennial Publication Committee 1989, p. 15.

[10] BCA Centennial History Project Committee 1998, p. iv.

New York in 1936. By the 1930s, Shin Buddhists had established the basis of their organizations in North America and the Nisei had gradually altered the structure of the missions/churches.

Socio-Economic Services

Asian American scholars have already pointed out the Buddhist churches' social functions. For instance, Frank Miyamoto describes the role of Buddhism as institutions, which kept the memories of Japan alive in the minds of Japanese immigrants and contributed to the formation of their families.[11] Tetsuden Kashima argues that Buddhist churches played a role in ethnic adjustment and devised ways to benefit their members and raise funds to sustain their operations.[12] But the socio-economic services provided by the early Issei Buddhist are still unexplored.

In the period of early propagation, a Shin Buddhist minister's routine exceeded his ministerial work. In Hawaii, the propagation center often served as something like a town office in Japan. According to Imamura Yemyō 今村恵猛 (1866–1932), the second bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii who supervised its operation for more than thirty years, when a child was born, the parents would ask the minister to help them register it at the Japanese Consulate and even to name that child. When a couple married, the minister issued a marriage certificate. If the family intended to send money back to their relatives in Japan, the minister helped them write a letter and negotiate at the bank. Ministers also served as mediators, however, when mediation failed, both sides ended up blaming the minister. In the meantime, ministers signed most of the administrative paperwork required by the Consulate on behalf of their fellow countrymen. The Japanese Consul in turn asked favors of the ministers. For example, when a natural disaster occurred in Japan and relief funds were needed, the Consul would request ministers to collect donations at their missions. Because of these daily contacts however, ministers could develop a close relationship with their parishioners, and were able to give them ethical advice and spiritual guidance without offending them.[13]

In addition to ministers' individual efforts, Buddhist missions/churches provided various community services. For instance, the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles (Rafu Bukkyōkai 羅府仏教会) created the Office of Interme-

[11] Miyamoto 1981, p. 47.
[12] Kashima 1977, p. 137.
[13] Honpa Hongwanji Hawai Kaikyō Jimusho Bunshobu 1918, pp. 559–61.

diary Service (Keian-bu 桂庵部) in 1908 and helped immigrants find jobs and spouses.[14] In the previous year, the mission's Buddhist Women's Association (Fujinkai 婦人会) initiated three programs: a day-care center, as many couples had to work full-time; a boarding service for single Japanese women who were alone and unprotected in Los Angeles and reluctant to stay at regular inns accommodating many young single men; and a boarding service for pregnant Japanese women, including visits and care by an obstetrician or midwife before and after delivery.[15] In Hawaii, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii founded the Young Men's Savings Association (Seinen Chochiku-kai 青年貯蓄会) as early as 1903 and assisted immigrants who could not open bank accounts or had no financial sense. Members brought their savings on a weekly basis to the association, which then deposited the money at the branch office of Yokohama Shōkin Bank that updated the records of each individual in return.[16] In addition, the mission helped immigrants find jobs, lent them sports equipment, and provided them with basic medical assistance.[17]

A money-pool, known as *tanomoshi* 頼母子, was a form of credit union through which Buddhist missions/churches supported their members and made additional income. *Tanomoshi* initially operated as a system to help a friend who sought financial aid in setting up a new business. A group of immigrants agree to pay a certain amount of money into the pool and the money is loaned interest-free to the person who needs it. As a formality, that individual buys dinner for the contributors and later pays off their dues in monthly installments together with a small monetary gift to each member. These members meet every month and set up a new pool, and the remaining members bid for its use based on their agreed interests. The members end their gatherings when debts are paid off. Thus, *tanomoshi* developed as not only a credit union but also a social function, enhancing the bond of a group of Japanese immigrants based on mutual trust without attesting to interest.[18]

Although *tanomoshi* was a kind of an economic institution, the Buddhist churches also benefited from sponsoring it. For instance, San Jose Buddhist Church sponsored the first and second gatherings of a *tanomoshi* in 1909,

[14] *Rafu bukkyō* 羅府佛教 2, no. 6, 1908, p. 17.

[15] *Rafu bukkyō* 2, no. 6, 1908, p. 18; 1, no. 8, 1907, pp. 17–19. Portland Buddhist Church also made twenty rooms always available for Japanese immigrants through its boarding service (advertisement in *Butsu no oshie* 仏の教え 10, no. 8, 1913).

[16] *Dōbō* 同朋 4, no. 12, 1903, p. 33.

[17] Advertisement in *Dōbō* 8, no. 5, 1903.

[18] Miyamoto 1981, pp. 21–22.

after which each contributor donated five dollars to the church.[19] Watsonville Buddhist Temple established a credit union similar to the *tanomoshi* system in 1923 on behalf of its members and for the sake of the church itself.[20] San Diego Buddhist Church incorporated a similar method into its monetary program to sustain the operation of the church in 1933, with a membership of 156 people who paid fifty cents each as their fees.[21] It seems that being a member of a Buddhist church was considered to guarantee status, since he was characterized as hardworking and a man of integrity; hence, the *tanomoshi* sponsored by Buddhist churches was trustworthy and its members were faithful to its aims. In this way, local Shin Buddhist missions/churches contributed to the solidarity of the ethnic community.

Recreation

For those of Japanese ancestry (hereafter Nikkei), Buddhist organizations served as their social gathering. There were four kinds of leisure activities at Buddhist missions/churches. First, people convened at times of major annual rituals such as the New Year's service, commemorating ceremonies for Buddha's and Shinran's birthdays, and the service honoring Shinran's passing (*hōon-kō* 報恩講). On such occasions, the Buddhist Women's Association offered lunch or dinner and those who visited enjoyed the entertainment. For instance, a New Year's party's program at Portland Buddhist Church in 1913 included *shamisen* 三味線, *shakuhachi* 尺八, violin and mandolin recitals; *uta* 歌 (songs); *shigin* 詩吟 (poem recitation); and even *kyōgen* 狂言 (farcical plays related to Noh).[22] In Hawaii, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission was well known for its entertainment whenever it held major services. For example, the commemoration of Shinran's birthday in May 1908 was followed by a talent show, farcical play, concert, sword dance, costume parade, etc.[23] In addition to major services, members would gather and interact after Sunday services and in periodical group meetings, as well as on occasions when they welcomed guests from Japan.

Second, Buddhist missions/churches sponsored public events involving immigrants. During 1913, Portland and Seattle Buddhist Churches held public speeches (*benronkai* 弁論会) every Saturday, including public debates,

[19] *Beikoku bukkyō* 米国仏教 10, no. 4, 1909, p. 16.
[20] Terakawa 1936, p. 175.
[21] Terakawa 1936, p. 355.
[22] *Butsu no oshie* 10, no. 4, 1913, p. 17.
[23] *Dōbō* 9, no. 6, 1908, p. 29.

informal talks and the serving of refreshments. For instance, a speaker gave a presentation on various topics for fifteen minutes, such as the diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States, Japanese history or Japanese culture. Some of them reported on their trip back home and even addressed political issues such as critiquing the alien land laws in California and those dealing with the naturalization of Japanese immigrants. One speaker also analyzed the economy in the city of Portland.[24] In San Francisco, the Buddhist church sponsored public speeches and debates, *kendō* 剣道 and *jūjutsu* 柔術 contests, and the exchanging of New Year's cards.[25]

Buddhist missions/churches also put on entertainment especially designed for children. For its New Year's party in 1913, for example, Seattle Buddhist Church organized events such as showing motion pictures, and performances of magic shows, a children's choir, comic monologues (*rakugo* 落語), comic dances, plays, and concerts. Boxes of candies were given away to the children as well. Almost four hundred children and their parents attended the party until half past eleven at night.[26] In Sacramento, the Buddhist church sponsored outings for the children.[27]

Third, reading was another form of leisure activities for the immigrants; hence, Buddhist missions/churches often founded their own libraries. Members donated Japanese and English books to them, while libraries acquired new publications. At the beginning of 1913, Seattle Buddhist Church possessed 1,817 books and loaned them out for a small fee. Portland Buddhist Church's library was open everyday at ten o'clock in the morning.[28] The Buddhist churches in San Francisco and Sacramento, as well as the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Mission, built libraries.[29]

Fourth, monthly journals published by the Buddhist missions/churches appeared to be a good source of sharing information and entertainment. These journals were not only a means of spreading the Buddhist teachings, but also exchanging information for the immigrants. In addition to the reports directly related to the management of missions/churches such as financial ledgers, announcements of services, and a list of donors, the journals periodically reported on members' activities, including printing obituaries,

[24] For instance, *Butsu no oshie* 10, no.1, 1913, p. 16.
[25] *Beikoku bukkyō* 17, no. 3, 1916, pp. 21–22; 19, no. 5, 1918, pp. 20–21.
[26] *Butsu no oshie* 10, no. 2, 1913, pp. 17–18.
[27] *Beikoku bukkyō* 13, no. 6, 1912, p. 40.
[28] For instance, *Butsu no oshie* 10, no. 2, 1913, p. 22.
[29] *Beikoku bukkyō* 13, no. 6, 1912, p. 40; advertisement in *Dōbō* 8, no. 5, 1907.

giving information about those moving to other locations and opening up of new businesses, and introducing new members. *Rafu bukkyō*, the journal published by the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles also contained *rakugo*, poems and farcical short stories, which were often contributed by the congregation, in addition to local news and correspondence from Japan. *Dōbō*, published by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, followed suit, but it also introduced a history of native Hawaiians and their customs.[30]

Apart from providing recreational activities to Japanese immigrants, the Buddhist missions/churches occasionally helped them interact with other ethnic groups. Records show that the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles hosted an event called the "Great Entertainment Performed by Japanese and American Players" (Nichibei Gōdō Dai Engei-kai 日米合同大演芸会) on July 1, 1916. Performances included dancing such as a waltz, solo vocals and sword dancing; piano, violin and classical Japanese instrumental music; and the singing and dancing of ethnic songs. It is said that six hundred people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds attended.[31] One local newspaper reported that:

> For East is East and West is West. And never the twain shall meet. But last evening proved the exception, for occidental and oriental mingled in perfect harmony at the American and Japanese concert at Yamato theater. There was not a minute of the evening that could be called uninteresting. In the audience there were many contrasts. Seated beside each other were Japanese, Chinese, Hindu, Kanaka, Burmese, Persian, English, American and various other nations, each dressed according to the fashion of his country, and each showing his approval of the performance and in his own way [sic].[32]

Although there is no mention of the Buddhist order in this newspaper article, the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles helped facilitate interaction between Japanese and Euro-Americans as well as other ethnic minorities.[33]

[30] *Dōbō* 4, no. 8, 1908, pp. 18–21; 4, no. 12, 1908, pp. 18–19.

[31] *Beikoku bukkyō* 17, no. 8, 1916, pp. 13–14.

[32] According to the Tribune on July 2, 1916, quoted in *Beikoku bukkyō* 17, no. 8, 1916, p. 14.

[33] The Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles also held services for Euro-American sympathizers, for instance on the occasion of Śākyamuni's and Shinran's birthdays in May 1916 (*Beikoku bukkyō* 17, no. 6, 1916, pp. 11–12).

Education

Buddhist missions/churches supported the education of Japanese nationals and their children. In the 1900s, Imamura initiated various educational programs and founded an elementary school in 1902, a junior high school in 1907 and a girls' high school in 1910, all of which were affiliated with his mission.[34] He also organized night schools to teach English to the immigrants, to which Buddhist sympathizers like Mrs. L. S. Mesick and Mrs. Barber offered help as early as 1899.[35] On the mainland too, the Buddhist church in San Francisco established an English language school for Japanese immigrants in 1903. Seattle Church, including its Port Blakely branch, the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, and Guadalupe Buddhist Church followed suit.[36] In addition to these schools, almost all Buddhist missions/churches built Japanese language schools, where the minister served as its schoolteacher and taught Japanese to the Nisei children. Being in that position, he was called *sensei* 先生 (teacher), instead of *goin-san* 御院さん, or *jūshoku* 住職, the common way of calling a resident Buddhist priest in Japan.[37]

There are four reasons why a Buddhist organization supported a language school. First, ministers were relatively free during the week, though busy on the weekends with officiating at various services. Second, teaching was a part-time job, which was not a desirable occupation for immigrants who needed full-time work. Third, a small number of parents could not afford the cost of operating language schools, so they asked a Buddhist organization for help. Fourth, the Buddhist mission/church could obtain extra income and subsidize the minister's salary by supporting a Japanese language school.[38] Therefore, a church with a language school seemed to be mutually beneficial.

Some Issei educators, however, believed Buddhism and education should be kept apart. Particularly in Hawaii, Japanese Christians, who disseminated their message to Americanize the Nisei through public education, were eager to remove the Buddhist influence from the Japanese language schools. By 1909, Nishi Hongwanji had the largest school system in Hawaii and it is estimated that its Buddhist clergy taught at one-third of the islands' Japanese language school, whose curriculum reflected that of the education

[34] Hongwanji Shiryō Kenkyūjo 1961–84, pp. 427–28.
[35] Centennial Publication Committee 1989, p. 21.
[36] Rust 1951, p. 145. *Beikoku bukkyō* 3, no. 7, 1902, p. 25; 4, no. 5, 1903, p. 27; 12, no. 2, 1911, p. 17; 13, no. 6, 1912, p. 40.
[37] Morioka 1961, p. 633.
[38] Tsunemitsu 1964, p. 346.

in Japan since the immigrants intended to return to their home country.[39] Christian priests such as Okumura Takie 奥村多喜衛 (1865–1951) and Eguchi Kazutami 江口一民 (n.d.) criticized Nishi Hongwanji. In their minds, the Buddhist organization propagated loyalty to the Emperor and nationalistic values at these language schools and operated them as a side business. In 1911, Consul General Ueno (n.d.) also argued that there was no more need for Japanese nationals to rely on religious organizations to sponsor their children's education, when the immigrants had slowly become independent.[40]

Bishop Imamura had his own reasons for protesting such criticism. He saw the importance of individuation in American education and valued the coninuation of Japanese language schools in Hawaii. For him, the United States was founded on the principles of liberalism and cosmopolitanism, as many people were multi-lingual.[41] Louise Hunter observes: "Buddhist educators . . . did not see how they could create the desired bond of sympathy and mutual understanding between the first- and second-generation Japanese without making the religion of the parents intelligible to the children."[42] But as a response to the permanent settlement of Japanese nationals in Hawaii and the nationwide movement of Americanization, Imamura eventually began to accommodate values and principles being taught at American public schools into Nishi Hongwanji's school system. For instance in 1917, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii published *Five Appeals to American Patriotism* and urged Nisei Buddhists to study the political ideologies of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence, Washington's Farewell Address, Monroe's Seventh Annual Message, Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech and Wilson's War Message.

Competition could also be found within the Buddhist Japanese language schools. There were cases of rivalry triggered by different school-supported groups in Hawaii, such as various prefectural associations (*kenjinkai* 県人会).[43] On the mainland, Reverend Masuda Kōgen 益田宏巖 (1901–1945) of Berkeley Buddhist Church attempted to build a language school in addition to the established one. His efforts however created a schism within the

[39] Asato 2006, p. 11.

[40] Asato 2006, pp. 7–10. For a detailed discussion of the separation of education and religion, see Okita 1997, pp.121–37.

[41] Moriya 2001, pp. 192–93, 199.

[42] Hunter 1971, p. 99.

[43] Asato 2006, p. 11.

church that eventually led the opposing group to affiliate itself with Higashi Honganji in 1926. (This was the beginning of Berkeley Higashi Honganji.[44])

Some Shin Buddhist ministers even took an anti-Buddhist education stance in the Japanese language school system. According to Moriya Tomoe, Reverend Tanaka Taishin 田中諦心 (n.d.–1962), who participated in the first meeting of Issei educators in San Francisco in 1912 along with a few other Shin Buddhist ministers, argued that Buddhist churches or Japanese associations should not monopolize the management of Japanese language schools because the objective of education was to encourage the Nisei to adapt themselves to the ways of America. Reverend Terakawa Tansai 寺川湛済 (1893–1944), the resident minister of Stockton Buddhist Church and principle of a Japanese language school, who later received a Master's degree from Stanford University in 1926, created a unique curriculum, because he was not interested in introducing ideological values such as moral, spiritual and religious principles. He saw the importance of facilitating communication between the Nisei and Issei, promoting children's understanding of their parents and Japan, and encouraging the Nisei to have pride in themselves despite racial discrimination.[45]

Legal Settlements

In addition to the contentious relationship between the Buddhist missions/churches and Japanese language schools, there were other cases of conflict in the Buddhist immigrants' boundary operations. According to Donald Tuck, confrontations occurred between the Nishi Hongwanji headquarters in Kyoto and its counterparts in Hawaii and on the mainland, and between the central offices in North America and local missions/churches.[46] One such example can be observed in the split of the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles during the 1910s, when the Los Angeles District Court settled the contention between the two parties. In the aftermath, its head minister changed his affiliations and began propagation in Higashi Honganji, another large Shin Buddhist denomination, in North America.

The Japanese newspapers in Los Angeles made the mission's internal disputes public during the late 1910s. Japanese immigrants had built three Shin Buddhist missions in Los Angeles by the early 1910s: Rafu Bukkyōkai (founded in 1904), Nanka Bukkyōkai 南加仏教会 (1905), and Chūō

[44] Moriya 2005, p. 127.
[45] Moriya 2005, pp. 122, 129.
[46] Tuck 1987, pp. 198–99.

Bukkyōkai 中央仏教会 (1912). They were all affiliated with Nishi Hongwanji. In 1917, its Kyoto headquarters attempted to consolidate them for more effective propagation, but Izumida Junjō 泉田準城 (1868–1951), the head priest of the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles, opposed it, reflecting the opinion of the majority of his congregation. However, the pro-consolidation members of the Rafu Bukkyōkai tried to discredit him, and the headquarters ordered him home to Japan. Izumida refused, only causing the anti-group to accuse him of taking temple property and money, and took him to court.

After several sessions, the case went to trial as Jisōji v. Izumida (Jisōji Tetsugai 二十二鉄鎧 [1888–n.d.] was the assistant minister of the Rafu Bukkyōkai at that time) and the verdict was passed down in October 1918. The court found that neither the head priest nor the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles was under the jurisdiction of Nishi Hongwanji, because the by-laws of the Rafu Bukkyōkai had not specified their relationship, reflecting the attitude of Izumida, who had defined his organization as an independent Buddhist order. He had intended to serve the entire community of Japanese nationals in Los Angeles without denominational restrictions and promote Śākyamuni's doctrine to Euro-Americans as part of his transsectarian efforts. This incident suggests that the differences between the American legal system and Japanese cultural applications were the loci of the lawsuit, and that the mission's by-laws were the keys to the settlement.[47]

The incident also implied that there was hostility between prefectural groups related to the split of the Rafu Bukkyōkai. Those who supported Izumida largely came from Saga prefecture in Kyushū, whereas the immigrants from Hiroshima prefecture were the dominant group in the Japanese community. Concerning rivalry among prefectural associations, Yukiko Kimura states:

> As there were individual differences, there were also collective differences among the Japanese immigrants. Especially divisive [factors] were the provincial customs and dialects that had developed through the centuries of feudalism in Japan. . . . Because of difficulty in communicating and strangeness of each other's

[47] Michihiro Ama, "The Formation of Shin Buddhist Temples in Los Angeles: The Buddhist Dispute over the Applicability of Japanese Practice to the American Legal System," a paper presented in Section A215 (Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group) of the 2003 Annual Meeting of American Academy of Religion, held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 22–25. The revised article will be included in Duncan R. Williams and Tomoe Moriya, eds. *Issei Buddhism in the Americas*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010 (forthcoming).

> customs, newly arrived prefectural groups often met with open hostility from the old-timers of large prefectural groups.[48]

Unlike the nationalization of Japanese people corresponding to the centralization of the Meiji government, regionalization of Japanese nationals was evident overseas in the formation of the *kenjinkai*. Regional differences of Japanese immigrants led to interethnic conflicts affecting the management of Buddhist churches.

The conflict within the Buddhist Mission of Los Angeles was not caused by doctrinal differences but personal and social factors, including the minister's personality and the provincialism of the immigrants. After the lawsuit, Nishi Hongwanji defrocked and expelled Izumida. A few years later, he chose to affiliate himself and his group with Higashi Honganji in 1921 for the continuation of his work. As a result, not only did he remain in Los Angeles but also initiated Higashi Honganji's propagation on mainland United States and in Canada. Izumida's rivalry with the Nishi Hongwanji headquarters, therefore, entered a new stage—the competition of two Shin Buddhist denominations in continental North America.

Political Activities

While negotiating and contesting within their own community, Shin Buddhists supported the Nikkei's politico-economic crusade in Hawaii. The Shin clergy together with priests of other Japanese Buddhist denominations were instrumental in the 1920 territory-wide sugar plantation strike initiated by the Nikkei. Many scholars, such as Nakano Tsuyoshi, Moriya Tomoe, Asato Noriko, Louise Hunter, Eileen Tamura and Gary Okihiro, have studied the significance of the strike; hence, it suffices to make a brief summary of their findings to describe Shin Buddhists' early political boundary actions in the territory of the United States.

The 1920 strike began as a demand for higher wages in 1917. The Young Men's Association appeared to be the medium for organizing the local labor force. Among them, Waialua Young Men's Buddhist Association, on the Island of Oahu helped unite local campaigns. Prior to the strike, the bishops of six Buddhist schools together with Shinto priests had made an alliance and sent the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association a petition, dated January 22, 1920, asking it to meet the demands of the Japanese workers.[49] Louise Hunter describes the essence of the petition:

[48] Kimura 1988, pp. xiii –xiv.
[49] Okihiro 1991, p. 68; Tsutsumi 1921, pp. 10–17, 76.

> Cane workers, burdened throughout the war by a fluctuating economy and unrelieved inflation, were in dire financial straits and were preparing for the worst, the petition warned. The Buddhist clergy thought it unjust to deny a share of the bonus to laborers who could not work a minimum of twenty days of every month. Some persons, they wrote, were legitimately unable to work twenty days out of every month; human beings, after all, were not machines. Furthermore, the bonus, as high as it was, did not compensate for the accelerated cost of living. As the spiritual leaders of the Japanese community, the priests felt compelled to take a stand for the right, as they saw the right [sic]. For years they had dutifully urged their countrymen to render faithful and honest service to the planters, but now the time had come to support the just claims of labor. The letter was signed by Bishop Yemyô [sic] Imamura of Honpa Hongwanji; Eikaku Seki of the Shingon-shū; Bishop Hōsen Isobe of the Sōtō-shū; Acting Bishop Ryōzen Yamada of the Jōdo-shū; Bishop Chōsei Nunome of the Nichiren-shū; and Kankai Izuhara of the Higashi Hongwanji. Chinjirō Sakaki [Sakaeki], a Shinto priest, and Katsuyoshi Miyaō of the Izumo Taisha also attached their signatures to the letter.[50]

The clergy saw the cause of the strike as economic, rather than doctrinal, and stood behind the strikers, as they thought that the improvement of living standards would prevent socio-political disturbances. In addition, Moriya points out changes in Imamura's attitude toward the immigrants' economic situation. During the 1904 Waipahu strike, he had succeeded in the mediation of Japanese workers by taking a pacifist stance and encouraging them to return to work. However, this approach did not work twice in the 1909 strike and he realized that he had ignored the suffering of the workers. Together with other Buddhist leaders, he abandoned a conciliatory reaction to the 1920 strike and sided with his fellow men.[51] After the statement was issued, however, the American press condemned the Japanese Buddhist priests and even labeled them as "agitators."[52]

Tensions also rose from the hostile relationship between Buddhists and Japanese Christians. As seen in the case concerning the debate on Nisei education, these two groups argued over the degree of adapting the Nik-

[50] Hunter 1971, pp. 121–22.
[51] Moriya 2001, p. 119.
[52] Hunter 1971, p. 122.

kei to American middle-class values. Gary Okihiro describes the Christian position as: "the merging of religious belief with political allegiance by the Christian clergy was in accord with the Americanization movement's claim that Buddhism and other alien ideologies encouraged rebelliousness, while Christianity promoted patriotism."[53] Japanese Christian leaders opposed the 1920 Nikkei strike and encouraged their parishioners to be subservient to the planters.

For the Shin Buddhists however, their participation in the strike meant more than competing against Christians. Imamura tried to synthesize the values of Śākyamuni's teachings, such as equal emancipation from suffering and the dignity of life, with the principles of American democracy, such as liberty, equality and human rights. He also argued that Buddhism was a universal religion, as it could flexibly deal with different cultures and various national conditions. By supporting the Nikkei strikers, Imamura sought to remove sectarian differences and create a new form of Buddhism in Hawaii and even "American Buddhism."[54]

There are other factors, which enabled Shin Buddhists in Hawaii to be politically active. First the Japanese were the major ethnic group there. By 1920, residents of Japanese ancestry held over forty percent of Hawaii's total population.[55] Second, the geographical location, territorial status and the plantation economy differentiated the politics of Hawaii from that of mainland United States. Under these circumstances, the Nikkei as the largest ethnic group in Hawaii was able to voice its demands and raise ethnic nationalism within the Nikkei community.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to shift the emphasis given to *kaikyō*, as its main discussion has almost always been on the Japanese part of the story. By overlapping the overseas history of a Japanese Buddhist denomination with a study of an ethnic Buddhism's boundary formation in the United States, this paper aims to integrate perspectives from both sides and relativize the concept of *kaikyō*. Together with the idea of *bukkyō tōzen*, *kaikyō* has implied the Japan-centered way of explaining Buddhism's transmission or more specifically views of a denomination's headquarters. However, despite

[53] Okihiro 1991, pp. 133–34.
[54] Nakano 1981, pp. 60–61.
[55] Okihiro 1991, p. 129.

Japan's Buddhist leaders' national pride indicated in the "eastward transmission of Buddhism" and the intention of "opening up" Buddhist teachings to Euro-Americans, the early history of *kaikyō* was inseparable from the Japanese immigrants. For this reason, some Japanese Buddhist priests and scholars prefer to use "Teachings, pursuing the immigrants" (*tsuikyō* 追教) to characterize and differentiate the overseas Buddhist propagation in the prewar period from that of the later period. However, such designation is not helpful either, as it still fails to incorporate the American side of the story into its narrative. This paper has demonstrated that Japanese Buddhist organizations assisted the immigrants to settle in the United States through socio-economic and recreational services, and contributed to the maintenance of ethnic harmony in the Nikkei community.

Boundary actions in the fields of education and legal settlements, however, illustrate that Buddhist immigrants were by no means homogeneous. Shin Buddhist ministers were in conflict with not only one another, but also the leaders of various groups who were interested in those problematic areas. Strong connections between a local Buddhist group and a prefectural association may have fueled interethnic animosities. Thus, the establishment of a Higashi Honganji temple in Los Angeles in 1921 was more than just the beginning of its organizational history in the United States or merely the failure of Nishi Hongwanji's efforts to consolidate three temples in Los Angeles, as dictated by denominational leaders. This incident also signified the power of a constitutional state, the laws of the United States, to which Buddhism had to conform without exception.

To further inquire into *kaikyō*, it is necessary to situate its history (*kaikyōshi*) in other contexts and respond to more critical questions. First, in the overseas propagation of Japanese Buddhism, was there a significant development of the doctrine? To what degree, did the formation of ethnic Buddhism run parallel with the modernization of Japanese Buddhism? Second, what is the basis of comparing *kaikyō* on the Asian continent and in North America? For instance, scholars have pointed out that Japanese Buddhism was not really "sinicized" in China, as it was part of Japan's colonial enterprise. But recently Kiba Akeshi and others have portrayed Asia's side of *kaikyō*.[56] Finally, is *kaikyō* still a useful concept today? If it suggests a denomination-centered overseas outlook, when should *kaikyō* as the denomination's initial overseas activity end? Hopefully, these questions will be answered as time goes by.

[56] For instance, Kiba and Cheng 2007.

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