

The Deployment of Western Philosophy in Meiji Buddhist Revival

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THE REVIVAL AND reform of Buddhism in Meiji Japan took place in an intellectual climate in which the West was recognised as both model and measure of modernity. The West was a resource and was used in a variety of ways. From the early 1870s both Nishi Honganji and Higashi Honganji sent delegations to England and Europe. Kasawara Kenjū and Nanjō Bun'yū, young priests who studied modern academic approaches to sacred texts with Max Müller at Oxford from 1876, were the first of many who adapted and applied the methods of orientalist scholarship and biblical criticism to the needs of Buddhism.¹ Initiatives in social reform and interaction with the lay community, such as the formation of Sunday schools, the Young Men's Buddhist Association and the creation of a Buddhist wedding ceremony, show evidence of Western inspiration and the use of Christianity as a model for the role of religion in modern society.² To this list might be added

¹ Among the results were the compendiums of Buddhist knowledge which appeared in the early twentieth century. Nanjō's *Bukkyō seiten* appeared in 1905; Takakusu Junjirō's definitive edition of the canon was published from 1924. I discuss this importance of the journey to the West of these scholars in a forthcoming paper. It is nevertheless relevant here to comment that they participated in professional organisations such as the Pali Text Society and channeled knowledge of intellectual developments in the West back to Japan.

² The YMBA, *Dainihon bukkyō seinenkai* was formalised in 1894 and was followed

the philanthropic activities, publications, and modes of lay practice such as those introduced by Ōuchi Seiran.³ In this paper I propose to consider Inoue Enryō's widely distributed and influential book, *An Introduction to Revitalizing Buddhism*⁴ as a case study of a quite different function of the West in Buddhist revival at this time, a process I refer to as deployment. The term emphasizes his strategic purpose in referring to the West and most specifically avoids the connotations of influence or syncretism that are more usually resorted to in considering the relationship between the Buddhist and Western philosophical ideas that characterize his work. I argue that it is more revealing to analyse Inoue's work as a deployment of Western authority and prestige than as a syncretic philosophy.⁵

The process might alternately be called "strategic Occidentalism"—following James Edward Ketelaar and Edward Said—to indicate the way the West was used in Japanese discourse.⁶ This Occidentalism is, however, more than simply an inversion of what Said calls Oriental-

by a YWBA. *The Japan Weekly Mail*, July 1892, describes a wedding ceremony performed by Shimaji Mokurai in June, pointing out its similarity with the Christian ritual. The first Shintō wedding ceremony was not performed until 1901.

³ See Tsunemitsu Kōnen, *Meiji no bukkyōsha* (Meiji Buddhists) 2 vols., Tokyo, Shunjūsha, 1968, pp. 182–192 for details of Ōuchi's prolific and diverse activities.

⁴ Inoue Enryō (1858–1919), published his book, *Bukkyō katuron joron* (An Introduction to Revitalizing Buddhism), Tokyo, *Tetsugaku shoin*, in 1887. It has since been republished in Meiji Bunka Kenkyūkai, *Meiji Bunka Zenshū*, Vol. 9. Shūkyō, Tokyo: Tōyō University, 1954, pp. 377–416. An English translation by Kathleen Staggs is available in her unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "In Defence of Japanese Buddhism. Essays from the Meiji Period by Inoue Enryō and Murakami Senshō," Princeton, 1979. Except where otherwise indicated, translations are from her work, hence forth BKJ.

⁵ The present paper is taken from a larger study of the representation of Buddhism at Chicago in 1893 in which I discuss other examples of the process including the parading through Japan of Theosophist founder Henry Steel Olcott organised by Buddhist reform activists in 1889, and the Japanese translation and publication of Paul Carus's book, *The Gospel of Buddha*, in 1895. The deployment of Western authority was also a factor in the delegation to Chicago.

⁶ The term has been used by James Edward Ketelaar, "Strategic Occidentalism: Meiji Buddhists at the World's Parliament of Religions," *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, 11 (1991) pp. 37–56. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London and Henley, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

ism. There were basic similarities: the terms that Inoue and his Japanese contemporaries used to indicate the West were as imprecise and encompassing as the term Orient was in English and operated in precisely the same way to signify an alterity. Just as the Orient in European writings as “a collective notion identifying ‘us’ Europeans against all ‘those’ non-Europeans,”⁷ for the Japanese the Occident, “*seiyō*” or “*ōbei*,” defined by contrast, “*wa*,” the Japanese “us.”⁸ The important difference, however, was the reality of Western dominance in the relationship, and the function of the West in Meiji Japan as the standard and arbiter of achievement. This was especially relevant when Inoue wrote in the Meiji Twenties, a time of increased activity for re-view of Japan’s treaties with foreign powers. Favourable revision was perceived to depend on Japan being accepted as an equal member in the international community. Whether Japan followed the path of the West or defined modernity in indigenous terms, achievement would be measured against the West, and the treaty powers negotiating the terms of revision would be the ultimate assessors of what was acceptable. Consequently, in the battle for the “possession and guidance of social development in the empire,” as the *Japan Weekly Mail* described the religious debates of the time,⁹ the important issue was convincing the Western educated class of what the Buddhist religion could offer the modern nation. Evidence of this had to stand scrutiny in the terms of the modern West. In *Revitalizing Buddhism*, written during this period of intense debate over Japan’s future, Inoue deployed the authority of Western philosophy to argue the case for Buddhism as the ideological basis of modern Japan, and by extension, of the modern world.

Inoue Enryō’s publications did much to promote interest in Buddhism among the Western-educated elite of the Meiji Twenties, bringing a new interpretation of Buddhism, the product of two decades of

⁷ Said, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

⁸ “*Seiyō*” is literally the West; “*ōbei*” is an abbreviation that refers to Europe and North America. Japan’s alterity was further complicated by its attempts to redefine itself in relation to China. “*Tōyō*,” the East as opposed to “*seiyō*,” the West, reconsidered Japan as an Asian nation in relation to China. Stefan Tanaka, *Japan’s Orient: Rendering Pasts into History*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, University of California Press, 1993.

⁹ *Japan Weekly Mail*, March 1893.

Buddhist reform, out of specialist circles and linking it to the surge in nationalist sentiment of this time. Buddhism had entered the Meiji period under attack, the foreign heresy against which Shintō was defined. By the 1890s, through the efforts of Inoue and others, it had become a major resource for defining modern, national identity. The apparent paradox is that to promote Buddhism, Inoue gave up his status as a Buddhist priest and took the title philosopher (*tetsugakusha*). The word *tetsugaku* had been introduced into the Japanese language around 1870 by materialist philosopher Nishi Amane. It specifically denoted Western philosophy and carried the post-Enlightenment European connotation of the opposition between religion and philosophy.¹⁰ Philosophy was a secular activity.

By speaking for Buddhism as a philosopher, Inoue assumed the voice of universal rationality. He distanced himself from his Buddhist affiliations and attached the authority of impartial reason (*kōhei mushi* in his terminology) to his speech. He used this claim to unbiased and objective authority to continue the imperatives of Buddhist reform: to denounce Christianity, to argue that Japanese Buddhism was the Buddha's teaching, that Buddhism was not irrational, not otherworldly, nor an anachronistic vestige of the past, but the one religion in the world compatible with science and modern thought.¹¹

¹⁰ The character for *tetsu* had been used in Chinese in association with Confucian thought.

¹¹ Criticism of Christianity was fundamental to Inoue's project. One volume of *Revitalizing Buddhism* was entirely devoted to denouncing the "evil religion." But by denouncing it from the supposedly impartial stance of philosopher, Inoue enlisted the support of a wider audience, not just Buddhists. He did not simply dismiss it as evil but analysed it as irrational, conceptually untenable, pre-scientific, deleterious to Japan. Staggs, *op. cit.*, p. 154. The ploy apparently worked. Notto Thelle, though critical of Buddhist critics of Christianity, is generous in his praises for Inoue's rational approach. Notto R. Thelle, *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan: From Conflict to Dialogue 1854-1899*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 1987, pp. 100-101. Inoue's earliest publications were anti-Christian: *Haja shinron* (A New Refutation of Christianity) 1885; *Shinri kishin* (The Guiding Principle of Truth) 1886-1887. Volumes 1 and 2 were a "point by point refutation of what Inoue deemed the erroneous and irrational tenets of Christianity." Staggs, "In Defence of Japanese Buddhism . . .," *op. cit.*, pp. 191 ff. Inoue's publishing house, *Tetsugaku shoin*, published numerous anti-Christian works through the 1890s. Inoue warned, however, against taking Christianity too lightly. "It is much more profound than would be indicated by the foolish chattering of the missionaries we hear." *Ibid.*, p. 190.

Since Inoue was a founding member of both the *Seikyōsha* and the *Sonnō hōbutsu daidōdan*¹² his work links Buddhist revival with Japanese nationalist sentiment and the political issues of the Meiji Twenties. Most importantly, the *Manifesto*, an open letter to the Buddhist community calling for support for the delegation to Chicago,¹³ was an echo and a summary of the arguments he presented at length in *Revitalizing Buddhism*. The delegation to the Chicago World's Parliament of Religions emerged from the same stream of Buddhist activity.¹⁴ Therefore, summarizing Inoue's arguments will map the field of Buddhist revival discourse at this time, locating the various initiatives of revival—the need to win the support of the new generation, the need for Buddhists to undertake social and philanthropic work, the refutation of Christianity, the reestablishment of Buddhism's links with the state—within the nationalist program for the future of Japan.

INOUE ENRYŌ

Inoue Enryō, born the son of a Jōdōshinshū priest in 1858, was ordained at an early age and received a Buddhist education. From 1878 until he graduated Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from Tokyo Imperial University in 1885, his education was funded by the Higashi Hon-

¹² Founding members of the *Seikyōsha*, a nationalist organisation founded in 1888 “for the preservation of Japan's cultural autonomy” included prominent Buddhists Shimaji Mokurai, Inoue Enryō, Ōuchi Seiran and Chicago delegate Ashitsu Jitsuzen. The name is variously translated as the Society for Political Education (Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan*, Stanford University Press, 1969) or Society for Politics and Religion (Thelle, *op. cit.*, p. 101). The flexibility of reading of *kyō* (religion or education) encompassed the variety of opinions among its members. The *Sonnō hōbutsu daidōdan* (The Great Society for Revering the Emperor and Worshipping the Buddha) was more specifically a Buddhist nationalist organisation. Membership and aims of the two organisations overlapped.

¹³ This letter was headed “*Bankoku shūkyō daikaigi ni tsuite kakushū kyōkai ni nozomu*. A Request to the All Sects Council concerning the World's Parliament of Religions,” and signed Concerned Buddhists, *Shūkyō*, April 6, 1893 (Meiji 26) pp. 294–299.

¹⁴ This is not surprising considering Inoue's association with delegate Ashitsu Jitsuzen in the formation of the *Sonnō hōbutsu daidōdan* and the *Seikyōsha*, and the number of Inoue's close associates and colleagues in Buddhist revival who were signatories to the document.

ganji as part of their program for educating its most able priests. At Tokyo University Inoue studied under the young American Professor Ernest Fenollosa who taught classes in the history of modern Western philosophy, specializing in Hegel and in Herbert Spencer's theories of social development and evolutionary sociology.¹⁵ Such was the interest in Western philosophy among the Japanese elite at this time that Fenollosa was nicknamed *daijin sensei* (teacher of great men).¹⁶ Many who attended his classes already held positions of responsibility. Others were later to become leaders of the nation. Through his study of philosophy Inoue came into contact with this influential elite and from 1882 he actively worked to promote contact and understanding between Buddhist and secular intellectuals.

Inoue's period at Tokyo Imperial University coincided with indications of a growing interest in Buddhism among intellectuals. In 1881 Fukuzawa Yukichi declared his support for Buddhism and called upon "priests who were amenable to reason" to defend their religion.¹⁷ Two years earlier Fukuzawa's *Meiokusha* colleague, Katō Hiroyuki, then President of Tokyo University, had appointed Sōtō Zen priest Hara Tanzan to lecture on Buddhism, thereby setting the precedent of teaching Buddhism as an academic subject within a secular institution, a system of thought divorced from its ritual and practice. Buddhist philosophy was extracted from Japanese religion and placed in context with Western philosophy and science as a branch of knowledge. It was endowed with the prestige of university recognition.

Though Westernization continued strongly throughout the 1880s, the beginnings of a change of mood, a swing away from adulation of all things Western, at least among the elite, was evident from the early years of the decade. One sign of this was the immediate and generous response to Fenollosa's plea in 1882 for the preservation of Japanese art. His speech, delivered to the aristocratic *Ryūchikai*, apparently crys-

¹⁵ Lawrence W. Chisolm, *Fenollosa: The Far East and American Culture*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1963, p. 42.

¹⁶ Ernest F. Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, 2 vols., London, 1913, p. xiv.

¹⁷ Fukuzawa Yukichi, founding member of the *Meiokusha*, was one of the foremost popularizers of Western studies. This quote from *Chrysanthemum*, October 1881, p. 393, translated by Walter Dening.

tallized an already existing sentiment. Fenollosa received both financial and official support that allowed him to access and catalogue surviving collections and train Japanese to continue the work. The Emperor showed his personal support by bestowing official court rank on Fenollosa and awarding him several Imperial decorations, including the Order of the Sacred Mirror. By 1886 this promotion of Japanese heritage had been officially sanctioned.¹⁸

One of the consequences of this revival was the establishment of the Tokyo Fine Art academy under the direction of Okakura Kakuzō.¹⁹ The art this institute promoted was not the result of a nostalgic revival of the past, but a modern application of long established Japanese expertise. Traditional styles were studied for their universal principles, and the techniques of past eras were applied to make objects suited to contemporary life-styles. The revival of art, like that of Buddhism, exemplified the *Seikyōsha* ideal of adapting aspects of Japanese heritage to enhance the modern nation.²⁰

The movement to revive Japanese art indicated both the changed attitude to Westernization and also the functional value of Western authority in validating and promoting the project. Fenollosa, an American academic, led the campaign testifying to the universal value of Japanese art from the perspective of, and in the vocabulary of, Western aesthetics. Invoking the authority and prestige of Western philosophy and his own academic rank as philosopher was the nearest approximation to this voice of Western authority available to Inoue in his revival of Japanese Buddhism.

¹⁸ Chisolm, *op. cit.*, p. 50 describes the *Ryūchikai* incident. The introductory essay by Mary Fenollosa in Fenollosa, *op. cit.*, p. xviii, lists his Imperial honours.

¹⁹ The Institute, under Okakura's direction, was responsible for the Hōōden, the Japanese pavilion at the Chicago Exposition.

²⁰ Pyle notes the *Seikyōsha* preference for the slogan *kokusui kenshō* (promotion of nationality) over the conservative *kokusui hozon* (preservation of nationality). *Seikyōsha* were emphatically not conservative in the sense of clinging to the past. The past was a resource for modern interpretation, and only those aspects of the past that could contribute to the modern state were to be revived. Pyle, *op. cit.*, p. 71. Okakura, echoing the *Seikyōsha* position, believed that art belonged to its age and its people and therefore sought to develop art "according to the present condition based on the development of the past." Satoko Fujita Tachiki, "Okakura Kakuzō (1862–1913) and the Boston Brahmins," unpublished Ph.D. (American Culture), University of Michigan, 1986, pp. 53–55.

INOUE THE PHILOSOPHER

Inoue had established his identity as a philosopher not only through scholarship but also through his activities at university. The *Tetsugak-kai*, the Philosophy Society (1884) developed out of a society Inoue formed in 1882 for the study of Kant, Hegel and Comte, bringing together progressive leaders of both the Buddhist and secular worlds. Core members of this society included Buddhist prominent reform leaders (Ōuchi Seiran, Shimaji Mokurai, Hara Tanzan, Kitabatake Doryū, Kiyozawa Manshi) and other such prominent Meiji intellectuals as Inoue Tetsujirō, Shiga Shigetaka, Miyake Setsurei, Tanabashi Ichirō and Katō Hiroyuki. A number of these people would later become prominent in the *Seikyōsha*.²¹ In 1886 the group began publishing a journal, *Tetsugaku zasshi* (Philosophy Magazine), and in 1887 founded the publishing company, *Tetsugaku shoin* (Philosophy Press). This same year Inoue founded his school of philosophy, the *Tetsugakkan* (later to become the Tōyō University), teaching Western philosophy but also Chinese and Japanese thought, reviving the “pale shadow of Eastern philosophy.”²² Inoue diligently cultivated his image as philosopher through this constant repetition of the term in his activities.

Inoue made the decisive statement in 1885 when he gave up his Buddhist robes and distanced himself from institutional Buddhism. This in no way diminished his effort to propagate Buddhism but from this time he worked as an independent citizen. He thereby became an example of

²¹ Kathleen M. Staggs, “‘Defend the Nation and Love the Truth’: Inoue Enryō and the Revival of Meiji Buddhism,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, 38 (1983) p. 258. See also Staggs, “Defend the Nation . . .,” *op. cit.*, p. 173. Shimaji Mokurai and Ōuchi Seiran are well known leaders of Meiji Buddhist revival. Shimaji was one of the first Buddhist priests to visit the West. Ōuchi, a Buddhist layman, promoted publication, education and social reform. Kitabatake Doryū was a Honganji priest recently returned from study overseas, the first Japanese to visit Bodhgaya. Kiyozawa was at this time a Honganji student studying philosophy at Tokyo University. He later wrote on Hegel and Buddhism. Inoue Tetsujirō studied philosophy in Europe. Miyake, Tanabashi and Shiga were major *Seikyōsha* spokesmen. Shiga was the editor of their journal *Nihonjin*.

²² Tsunemitsu Kōnen, *Meiji no bukkyōsha*, 2 vols., Tokyo, Shunjūsha, 1968, p. 174. In 1889 Inoue travelled to Europe and America to investigate means of teaching Eastern thought there. Staggs, “Defend the Nation . . .,” *op. cit.*, p. 154.

the ideal he espoused in *Revitalizing Buddhism* the educated layman committed to Buddhism as a personal philosophical religion, studying Buddhism in the intellectual pursuit of truth and reviving Buddhism to preserve this truth and defend the nation. He worked without the restrictions of a conservative institutional bureaucracy,²³ free to emphasize the nonsectarian aspects of the new Buddhism, and to criticize the existing state of Buddhism. The greatest advantage however, was the authority and objectivity of the title “philosopher.” The author’s preface to *Revitalizing Buddhism* explained that as a philosopher his discussion of Buddhism was essentially different from that of a priest. The title allowed him to proclaim that his preference for Buddhism and rejection of Christianity was not based on prejudice but on a rational consideration of the issues. He would “judge on the basis of philosophy which is just and takes no sides.”²⁴ By taking the title “philosopher” Inoue promoted Buddhism and undermined Christian influence from a pedestal of rationality and objectivity.

Because my discussion of Buddhism is based on the impartial judgements of philosophy it is essentially different from the explanations of priests in the world . . .²⁵

HŌSUI, THE PARADIGMATIC MEIJI INTELLECTUAL

Inoue wrote *Revitalizing Buddhism* under the penname Hōsui and opened with an account of his search for truth which positioned Hōsui,

²³ Though reform was supported at the highest levels the conservative opposition should not be underestimated. It is apparent in the refusal to officially endorse the delegation to Chicago; in the absence of Honganji priests in the delegation in spite of the fact that invitations were originally extended to Nanjō, Shimaji and Akamatsu as the Buddhists most well known overseas. See also Murakami Senshō’s resignation from the Honganji over the controversy of his history of Buddhism. Staggs, “Defend the Nation . . .,” *op. cit.*, pp. 295–296. Haneda Nobuo mentions the factions in the Higashi Honganji, Inoue’s institution, around this time. See “The Life of Manshi Kiyozawa”, *December Fan: The Buddhist Essays of Manshi Kiyozawa*, Kyoto, Higashi Honganji, 1984, pp. 83ff.

²⁴ BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 350 and p. 360. As mentioned above, this in no way moderated his criticism of Christianity. Part 2 of *Revitalizing Buddhism* was called “Destroying Evil.”

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

the autobiographical subject somewhat distanced from Inoue himself, as the paradigmatic Meiji intellectual.²⁶ He recalled how, prior to the Restoration of 1868, he, like the nation in general, had followed Buddhism as a matter of course with little knowledge of its doctrines and little commitment, “secretly believ[ing] that there was no truth in Buddhism,” and had seized the opportunity offered by the incoming government’s attack on Buddhism (*haibutsu kishaku*) to “put aside his clerical robes” and seek truth elsewhere.²⁷ Hōsui described how he then turned to Confucianism and even Christianity but this brought him nothing more than the conviction that all the traditional religions were inadequate. Hōsui, like so many of the Meiji generation rejected religion because, as he perceived it then, it was not “in accord with the principles of truth.” He was still at the vanguard of intellectual trends in 1873 when he took up Western learning (1873 was Meiji 6, the year of the formation of the *Meiropusha*, the society for the promotion of Western learning) and again in the early 1880s when he rejected religion altogether and came to the conclusion that

The truth that I had been struggling with for over ten years was not in Confucianism or Buddhism, nor was it in Christianity; it could only be found in the philosophy that was being taught in the West.

However, unlike others who had followed this path, Hōsui did not rest here. He turned again to Japanese Buddhism, and with his mind sharpened by his training in philosophy, was finally able to see and understand the truth he had previously failed to notice.

Having discovered the truth within the world of philosophy, when I made one more review of the various religions of the past, it became increasingly clear that the truth is not within Christianity. It was also easy to prove that the truth is not within Confucianism. Only the Buddhist religion is largely in

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 362–364.

²⁷ For an account of the devastation of attacks on Buddhism associated with *haibutsu kishaku*, see James Edward Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and its Persecution*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990. Inoue (1858–1919) would have been only ten years old at the time and contrary to the implication of this “autobiography,” remained a priest until 1885.

accord with philosophical principles. Then I reviewed the Buddhist scriptures again, and gradually came to know the truth of their theories; I was overjoyed. Who would have thought that the truth that was the product of thousands of years of study in Europe already existed three thousand years ago in the East.²⁸

The year of this revelation was 1885, the year of Inoue's graduation, three years after Fukuzawa's call for the protection of Buddhism and the year that Ernest Fenollosa, Inoue's Professor of philosophy at Tokyo University, took Buddhist ordination.²⁹ *An Introduction to Revitalizing Buddhism*, the record of Inoue's discovery of the preeminence of Buddhism, was published in 1887. Inoue's timing coincided with growing reaction against excessive Westernization, and Hōsui's search for the truth mapped the path for patriotic Meiji intellectuals. Inoue vowed to "reform Buddhism and make it a religion for an enlightened world."

The realization of the preeminence of Buddhist truth was the cornerstone of Inoue's project. Buddhism alone was in accord with the teachings of modern philosophy and with modern scientific principles. Inoue argued that the Buddha's highest teaching, the truth of the Middle Way, existed only in Japan since it had died out in India and China. Consequently Japanese Buddhism is the sole source of the truth that Western philosophy has taken "thousands of years of study" to realize. More than this, Japanese Buddhism contains the truth that Western philosophy is only now approaching, but does not yet possess. Inoue therefore believed that Western scholars would now welcome Japanese Buddhism, and that Buddhism is the one great and unique contribution Japan could make to the modern world. Because of this Buddhism was a source of national pride and potential international

²⁸ BKJ, *op. cit.*, pp. 363–364.

²⁹ Fenollosa had studied Tendai Buddhism under Abbot Sakurai Keitoku of Miidera, and compared Tendai teaching with Western idealist philosophy, noting in particular that the teachings of this sect "offered all the colour and texture that Hegel lacked." Chisolm *op. cit.*, p. 131. Fenollosa's example would have reinforced Inoue's confidence in the appeal of Buddhist philosophy to modern Western intellectuals if nothing more. Inoue's Buddhist philosophy was also based on Tendai teachings.

prestige. Together these arguments formed his strategy for the revival of Buddhism by attracting support among the educated elite under the slogan *gokoku airi*, the defence of the nation through the love of truth.

GOKOKU AIRI

Gokoku airi united the fundamental sentiments of patriotism, intellectual reverence for the truth and a Confucian sense of duty. The opening lines of *Revitalizing Buddhism* asked “who has been born that does not care about his country? Who has studied and does not love the truth?” It was the scholar’s patriotic duty to study because “when a nation has no scholarship it cannot progress” and his obligation to study because a scholar owed his existence to the nation. “When a scholar has no nation he cannot sustain his existence.” Moreover, the nation must be independent if it were to produce wisdom and scholarship. Japanese scholars, therefore, Inoue argued, had a duty to work for the preservation of Japan’s independence. “It is a scholar’s duty to love the truth, and it is a citizen’s duty to defend the nation.” Since scholars were also citizens, “it is the duty of scholars to carry out, at the same time, both the great principles of defence of the nation and love of the truth.”³⁰ This apparently secular formulation was transformed into a revitalization of Buddhism by Inoue’s equation of truth (his term is *shinri no ri*) with the truth of Buddhism. *Shinri no ri* was emphatically not restricted to a positivist, empiricist truth of Western philosophy which, in his view, was “appropriate for experiential study of concrete objects but useless for the investigation of the intangible truth.”³¹ The truth for scholars to pursue was not the truth that forms “the basis of the branches of study and the arts . . . which are allowed to change along with the progress of the world.” It was rather “the unchanging and immutable truth,” “the truth that forms the basis of religion.” It was the truth that is the nature of Buddhism.³²

The underlying principle of the truth is not bounded by the world nor by the universe, and there is nothing in heaven or the cosmos to which it does not penetrate. It is truly ubiqui-

³⁰ BKJ, *op. cit.*, pp. 334–335.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 351 and 361.

tous, extensive, unfathomable and profound. It is truly without beginning, without end, immeasurable and innumerable. Therefore, to limit all ideas of it to this earth . . . is . . . the mistaken view of a scholar.³³

The scholar was called upon to defend the nation through the study of Buddhist philosophy since this was the highest expression of truth. Inoue's formulation of *gokoku airi* also linked patriotism with the more specifically Buddhist concern of reestablishing the relationship between Buddhism and the state, the concern which led Inoue and his colleagues to form the *Sonnō hōbutsu daidōdan* (Great Society for Worshipping the Buddha and Revering the Emperor). The interdependence between a scholar and his nation that was basic to this scheme can be read as a reformulation of the traditional relationship between the religion and the state familiar in South and Southeast Asia as the interdependence of the *sangha* (community of religious specialists) and the state. The security of the nation is essential for the *sangha* to pursue dharma, and the production of dharma is essential for the prosperity of the state. In Japan the concept was embodied in the expression *ōbō-buppō*, the inseparability of Imperial law and the Buddha's law. In Inoue's scheme the *sangha* and their pursuit of dharma was replaced by the lay community pursuing philosophic truth. Since this truth was equated with Buddhist truth, the lay community was in effect to take on the duty of the *sangha*. *Gokoku airi* was a reformulation of Buddhist polity adapted to a modern democratic and secular state, a polity based on the interdependence of the scholar and the nation rather than of the state and the community of religious specialists.

The study of Western philosophy was not excluded by this but seen as essential, if preliminary, training. As Hōsui, the authorial subject of *An Introduction to Revitalizing Buddhism* confessed, he had initially failed to recognise the truth in Buddhism because "my scholarly abilities were meager then and I was incapable of making that discovery."³⁴ He was only able to recognise the truth that had always existed in Buddhism after the study of Western philosophy had increased his intellectual capability. For Inoue, Western philosophy, unlike Christianity,

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 358–359.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

was a source of truth, but its truth was not as complete or profound as the truth of Japanese Buddhism. It occupied a position similar to the preliminary teachings of the Buddha, the teachings that provided the preliminary mental development that is a necessary prerequisite to understanding the more profound truth.³⁵ Inoue left no doubt that Buddhist thought surpassed Western philosophy. In his view Western philosophy would never be able to surpass even “ancient Indian scholarship,” by which he meant the Buddha’s teachings. “The only thing in which present day Western philosophy excels is providing theories as a foundation of scientific experimentation.”³⁶ Proving this was one function of the survey of Western thought and its comparison with the various teachings of the Buddha.³⁷

In *An Introduction to Revitalizing Buddhism* Inoue summarized the history of Western philosophy showing how it developed through the dialectical resolution of oppositions. Locke’s empiricism, followed by Leibnitz’s naturalism had been integrated by Kant; the materialism of Hume and the idealism of Burke had produced Reid’s dualism; Fichte’s subjectivity and Schelling’s objectivity had been harmonised by Hegel’s idealism. Post-Kantian German idealism and Scottish common sense were reconciled by the Frenchman Cousins. Spencer reconciled intellectual and non-intellectual extremes. Inoue’s point, however, was that the development was not yet complete: “All these theories contain some sort of excess which would in turn require resolution. Although the scholars have striven to maintain impartiality they have not been able to do so.” The teaching of Śākyamuni, on the other hand, embraced and reconciled these oppositions in the teaching of the Middle Way. “Unlike modern philosophers, Śākyamuni lived three thousand years ago, and yet was aware of the dangers of leaning towards extremes.”³⁸ Because it resolved this excess, the Middle Way is greater than any Western philosophy, “unparalleled in all the world

³⁵ The Buddhist term *hōben* (Sanskrit, *upāya*) refers to provisional truth used as a means of leading beings to the highest truth. It relates to the Buddha’s skill in teaching according to the ability of the audience to comprehend. See the account of the Five Periods of the Buddha’s teachings below.

³⁶ BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 397–398. Staggs’s thesis provides a detailed analysis of this, pp. 248 ff.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

and throughout the ages.”³⁹ The point of the survey of Western philosophy was to prove Buddhist superiority. The various sects of Buddhism contained all that was available in Western philosophy, but Western philosophy had not yet reached the stage of evolution of Japanese Mahāyāna.

Inoue validated this claim by conditionally identifying each of the theories of Western philosophy with the teaching of sects within Buddhism. This “identification” of Western philosophy and Buddhism is exemplified by his discussion of the Hīnayāna sect, Kusha (Abhidharma). Inoue began by equating Kusha with Western materialism because it is also based on the constant existence of elements of matter. These are the Five Aggregates (*goun* in Japanese; *pañcaskandha* in Sanskrit) which Inoue explained at some length.⁴⁰ The explanation then led to the qualification that Kusha was essentially different from materialism because among these five Buddhist elements, only one was matter in the Western sense of the word. The other four were perception, conception, volition and consciousness which are classified in the West as mind. Hence, Inoue concluded, Kusha differed widely from materialism. “Seen in this light, it [Kusha] is a philosophical theory of dualism.”⁴¹ In the space of a few paragraphs he had overturned his original equation, but the tentative identification had served its purpose by providing an opportunity to expound Buddhist doctrine. He had introduced the reader to a fundamental Buddhist concept. By a similarly qualified and partial identification of the Buddhist concept of Storehouse Consciousness (Japanese *arayashiki*, Sanskrit *ālayavijñāna*) with the absolute subjectivity of Kant and Fichte, Inoue equated the Hossō sect with Western Idealism, and the Tendai concept of *ri* with Hegel’s Absolute Reason.

Inoue’s scheme was to present Buddhist thought as both encompassing all of Western philosophy, and, following the dialectical pattern of the West, to have preceded it to its final development. Unlike Western philosophy, however, Buddhist teaching did not gradually evolve through the trials and error of men. It had all been taught by the Bud-

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 398–399.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 401 ff. Inagaki Hisao, *A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*, Kyoto, Nagata Bunshodo, 1985, p. 83, for a definition of *goun*.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

dha Śākyamuni during his lifetime. According to the Tendai doctrine of *goji* (Five Periods) the apparently diverse sects of Buddhism are related as graded and partial revelations of the one truth of the Mahāyāna Middle Way. The Buddha's teachings are divided into five periods. In the first, immediately after his Awakening, the Buddha revealed the Middle Way of the Avatamsaka sūtra.⁴² However, he realised that this was beyond the comprehension of his audience. "They simply could not hear what was being explained to them" because they were "clinging to the belief in the distinction of self and nonself."⁴³ So he then explained the superficial doctrines of the Hīnayāna "simply explaining the vanity of believing in the self." This accomplished, he was then able to teach the Vaipulya sūtras, and then by these degrees of the truth adapted to the audience's ability to comprehend, to progress towards the Mahāyāna sūtras. The message was that the Mahāyāna teaching of the Middle Way had been his original teaching, his last teaching, and the only complete teaching of his truth. The other teachings were expedients. As such, they were not false, but incomplete. They were stepping stones to the truth. The Middle Way of Japanese Tendai Buddhism was, Inoue explained, a more perfect expression of the conclusions reached thousands of years later by Hegel. By this scheme Inoue not only established Śākyamuni's priority over Hegel but also answered the charge that the Mahāyāna was not the Buddha's teaching.

Throughout the argument, Inoue's identification of Buddhist concepts with Western philosophical terms was always qualified and, as in the claim of the identity of the teachings of Hegel and Tendai above, were always of isolated examples, the coincidence of isolated principles rather than of coherent systems. Nowhere does he give an explication of any Western philosophy. Western names and categories appear rather as signposts within an introductory explication of Buddhist

⁴² Japanese *Kegongyō*. This is a Mahāyāna sūtra. For Inoue's account of this, see *ibid.*, pp. 426–428. The five periods are *Kegonji*, when Śākyamuni taught the *Avatamsaka sūtra*; the *Agonji* when he taught the *Agama sūtras*; the *Hōdōji* when he taught the *Vaipulya sūtras*; the *Hannyaji* when he taught the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*; the *Hokeji* or *Nehanji* when he taught the *Padma* (Lotus) and *Nirvāna sūtras*. The periods take their names from the Japanese names of the sūtras.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 427.

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thought; guides to familiarize the territory to the Western educated audience. Inoue used the prestige of Western philosophy to draw attention to, create interest in, and then expound, Japanese Buddhism.

BUDDHISM AND PATRIOTISM

The strong patriotic concern for the welfare and independence of the nation embodied in *gokoku airi* pervaded *Revitalizing Buddhism*. The first step was for scholars to make them better equipped to serve the nation through the study of philosophy.⁴⁴ Next, Inoue called upon them to revive Buddhism because it was the highest form of philosophy. “The doctrines of Buddhism are truly unparalleled in the world and peerless throughout eternity. Should we not offer our strength for this truth? Should we not offer our hearts for the sake of this truth?”⁴⁵ The intellectual passion for truth was to be justification enough for its preservation. There were however, more explicitly patriotic reasons for reviving Buddhism, and in 1887, the time of the publication, treaty revision and its implications of Western imperialism were the focus of patriotic concern.

In *Revitalizing Buddhism* Inoue introduced the basic *Seikyōsha*⁴⁶ premise that defence against Western imperialism depended on developing a strong national spirit. This would win the respect of foreign powers as well as assisting in building a strong nation, one that was capable of making a distinctive contribution to international welfare and progress. It was only by maintaining a distinctive national identity that Japan could expect to deal with the world as an equal, and this was the basic aim of treaty revision.

Our country’s present inability to establish friendships of equality with Westerners is not because of any difference in religion or language; neither have such differences prevented our national strength from equalling theirs. If a nation creates both financial solvency and strong military power, the people of that nation will have the necessary strength for instantly forming equal friendships with the West and revis-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 354; Staggs, “Defend the Nation . . . ,” *op. cit.*, p. 274, ref. note 69.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

⁴⁶ The *Seikyōsha* was founded in early 1888, and hence slightly postdates BKJ.

ing unequal treaties, no matter what religion they are practicing.⁴⁷

This argument was clearly directed at Japanese such as Fukuzawa, quoted above, who believed that becoming Christian would assist treaty revision. The advantage Buddhism offered here was its long connection with Japanese culture. Inoue argued that religion has a direct relationship with the spirit of man. For more than a thousand years, he wrote, Buddhism had permeated the hearts and minds of the Japanese. Consequently, for them to adopt Christianity would be to harm the spirit of the country and forfeit the independence of Japan. Progress, he continued, depended on maintaining the balance between heredity and adaptation. Therefore, adapting Japanese Buddhism to modern requirements would be more conducive to progress than following the early Meiji trend of adopting the completely foreign religion, Christianity. "When there is adaptation without heredity," as in the adoption of a foreign religion, "great harm results." "To unseat Buddhism and replace it with Christianity would surely have a negative influence on the spirit of independence." It would result in "the loss of Japan's inherited nature, and would unquestionably impair its development."⁴⁸

I simply cannot explain why anyone believes that by abandoning Buddhism and accepting Christianity we will be obtaining a more satisfactory means for establishing international relations, promoting a national constitution, or realizing the goal of treaty revision.⁴⁹

Inoue argued that imitation was poor political strategy. It would lead the West to despise the Japanese as lacking energy, strength and an independent spirit. Imitation was the behaviour of slaves and flatterers: "they may regard us as a vassal state . . . but never, by any stretch of the imagination, look upon us as equals."⁵⁰ In the *Nihonjin*

⁴⁷ BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

⁵⁰ Cf. Shiga Shigetaka (1863–1927), who published his *Conditions in the South Seas (Nanyō jiji)* in 1887. His voyages in Australia and New Zealand, among other places, had convinced him of the danger of "naive and weak-willed association with Westerners and their culture." Pyle, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–58.

a year later he would be even more explicit. “The best way Japanese can be made Japanese and Japan can remain independent was to preserve and propagate Buddhism.”⁵¹

The intimate connection between religion and the spirit of man was also an argument against conversion to assist modernization. Since “the West has a nature peculiar to the West” there was no reason to believe that any benefits that Christianity did bestow on the West would be transferred to Japan.⁵² Inoue also confronted the assumed association between Western progress and Christianity, arguing that even within the West, Christianity obstructed progress, it “oppressed men’s spirits and impeded the development of scholarship.”⁵³ Western progress had been achieved in spite of Christianity. Nevertheless, he observed that in Japan Christianity had attracted young men of talent. In a passage of *Revitalizing Buddhism* that may well have been addressed to the Dōshisha Christians, typical of the talented and ambitious men who converted to Christianity, Inoue wrote

It is said that the talented men, who should have ambitions for the future, are converted early in life to Christianity. . . . When I hear about this, I am deeply grieved. . . . If they have the intention of loving the country how can they not promote their country’s traditional religion? If they know that the clergy’s ignorance and lack of intelligence make them unfit to map out the revival of Buddhism, why do they not plan for the revival of the religion without the clergy?⁵⁴

The question Inoue posed was particularly pertinent since these converts rejected all traditional religion equally. The Christianity they had originally adopted was a liberal theology, elaborated upon by their own reading of contemporary criticism. By the late 1880s, the time of Inoue’s publication, they had distanced themselves from missionaries and were developing their own rationalized, demythologized interpretation of the Christian doctrine. Why, Inoue suggested, invoking the reform ideal of *koji* Buddhism, did they not carry out a similar exercise

⁵¹ Inoue Enryō, *Nihonjin* 1, April, 1888.

⁵² BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

on Japanese religion? Why not redirect their considerable intellectual effort to making the Japanese religion meet their ideals rather than the foreign one?

Inoue did not attempt to deny that Buddhism as it could be observed in contemporary Japan was in a degraded state and in dire need of reform. Rather, in the mode of all rhetoricians attempting to stir outrage and action, the picture he painted was exaggerated. "Present day Buddhism is practiced among foolish laymen, it is handed down by foolish clergy, and it is full of depravities; in short it is not free of becoming a barbaric doctrine."⁵⁵ This, however, was "nothing intrinsic to Buddhism" but rather the result of Buddhism reflecting the "corrupt customs of society."⁵⁶ Revival of Buddhism was linked to the reform of society. The obvious implication here is that the reform of society would be accompanied by revitalized Buddhism. Inoue also promoted Buddhist philanthropy and campaigned against superstition, folk belief in ghosts and the supernatural, and dissociated these from Buddhism.⁵⁷

In another passage Inoue confronted the *Min'yūsha* belief that social evolution justified their assiduous Westernization. As they saw it, since social evolution was universally applicable, all societies must pass through the same stages. For Japan to outstrip the West she must therefore follow the same path. They believed Japan would be able to overtake the West because of the superiority of the Japanese spirit. Inoue recognized that the intention of "our countrymen in accepting the West and studying English and German is not to make Japan an imitator and follower of other countries, but to make it a competitor and rival that will someday surpass the West."⁵⁸ But he warned that Japan would never overtake the West by following in its footsteps, nor by discarding her strong points and adopting the shortcomings of the West.⁵⁹ This could only be achieved by building a strong national identity, and as he had already argued, this depended on reviving and preserving Buddhism, which, in spite of its present state, was one of the strengths of Japan.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 351.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁵⁷ Staggs "Defend the Nation . . .," *op. cit.*, pp. 226-228.

⁵⁸ BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

⁵⁹ See Pyle, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

BUDDHISM AND INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE

Inoue believed in the necessity of projecting Japanese achievement in indigenous terms, not as an imitation of the West. For him Buddhism was the means by which Japan could gain the respect of the world and contribute to international welfare. *Revitalizing Buddhism* presented the Buddhist *Seikyōsha* position: Buddhism is Japan's "special product," her "strong point," a source of national identity and international recognition and prestige. The proposal carried the nationalistic appeal of Japanese superiority, and offered hope for the practical result of gaining recognition as a "civilized" nation and thereby effecting treaty revision. On top of all this, Inoue offered the altruistic appeal of contributing to the benefit of the world as a whole.

Buddhism is now our so-called strong point. Material commodities are an advantage of the West. Scholarship is also one religion. This fine product of ours excels those of other countries; the fact that its good strain died out in India and China may be called an unexpected blessing for our land. If we continue nurturing it in Japan, and disseminate it to foreign countries, we will not simply add to the honor of our nation. We will also infuse the spirit of our land into the minds of the foreigners. I am convinced that the consequences will be considerable.⁶⁰

In Inoue's world view, the one thing that is not found in any form in the West and the one thing that Japan might export to foreign countries and thereby win fame is Buddhism. The "good strain" of Buddhism he refers to is Mahāyāna, and its disappearance from India and China meant that Japan, as the sole repository of the Buddha's fullest teaching, had a particular duty to preserve and propagate it. Though now virtually extinct in its country of origin, "the little that remains is only the shallow doctrine of the Hīnayāna."⁶¹ Buddhism "is the basis of Eastern civilization" and has greatly influenced the scholarship, language, customs and even human sentiments of Asian civilizations.⁶²

⁶⁰ BKJ, *op. cit.*, pp. 370-371.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 368.

Only in our country, Japan, do we have these sacred sects and texts, as well as people who know the profundities of the one vehicle [Mahāyāna]. If this is not maintained in Japan today, and if the people leave, the writings perish, and the sects are destroyed, in what land will Buddhism rise again? This is why the support of Buddhism is our most pressing urgent need today.⁶³

Inoue did not miss the opportunity to suggest that the survival of the Mahāyāna teachings in Japan was also evidence of the racial superiority of the Japanese. Mahāyāna Buddhism had died out elsewhere because of the deterioration of the races. His botanical metaphor of the “strains” of a plant emphasized that though deriving from a common ancestral seed, the Mahāyāna Buddhism of India and China was not the same as the Mahāyāna Buddhism of Japan. This was always “the special product of the country that nurtured it.” However, “there is absolutely no reason why it cannot be transplanted to other lands.”⁶⁴ Inoue proposed that modern Japan cultivate this “good strain” of Buddhism to “make it a religion for an enlightened world” and export it to the West.

The Buddhism of today is Japanese Buddhism, and it is a special product of Japan. . . . Now, although our country produces many kinds of things, there are very few of them that can never be seen in the West. Everyone knows that we must look to the West to supply models not only for all kinds of commodities and utensils, but also for models of government, law, the military system, education, the physical sciences and technology. However, there is one thing that Japan may transmit to foreign countries and thereby win fame; that thing is Buddhism.⁶⁵

Inoue assured his readers that the West would welcome Japanese Buddhism. Firstly because “Western scholars have come to hate Chris-

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 365–366.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

tianity bitterly, and day and night, they are eagerly looking for a religion based upon philosophy.”⁶⁶ Japanese Buddhism resolved the oppositions of science, religion and philosophy that were tearing Christianity apart. It was compatible with science and offered both Buddhist philosophy, the completion of philosophical evolution, and philosophical Buddhism, a religion which accommodated the spiritual needs of the modern world. Buddhism offered a religion that was based on philosophical truth and which therefore, far from being in conflict with philosophy as Christianity appeared to be, offered an introduction to it. Western scholarship on Buddhism indicated existing interest in Buddhism in the West, but this interest was not as great as it could be because the West only had very limited and biased access to its truth. Their scholars only investigated the Hīnayāna, “the most shallow of all Buddhism,” and “the books about Buddhism sent to the West were all written by Christians.”⁶⁷ Inoue’s message was clear. If the West was to realize the worth of Japanese Buddhism, able Japanese scholars must present it to them.

It is the duty of Japan’s farmers to make agriculture flourish and to export food to foreign countries. It is the duty of merchants to increase trade and to compete with the foreigners. It is the scholars’ duty towards their country to make learning and religion prosper, and to propagate them far away to the West.⁶⁸

Buddhism was Japan’s gift to the West. Not only was it the most perfect expression of the truth that the Western world had been seeking for centuries, but it would provide the competition with Christianity that was essential if the West was to reach its full evolutionary development.⁶⁹ “The evidence of history shows us clearly that in the affairs of nations, when any kind of scholarship or religion is implemented as the

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 366–367.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 371.

⁶⁹ This is Inoue’s Buddhist expression of the *Seikyōsha* view that “because the progress of man depended on cultural diversity and competition, Japan had a mission—a moral obligation—to develop her distinctive national characteristics in order to contribute to world civilization.” Pyle, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

sole ideology of that nation, progress is impeded.”⁷⁰ By contrast, “the prosperity of the modern West is due to competition among all the branches of learning and the arts.” The West, however, had no religion except Christianity which “was often guilty of obstructing the development of science and philosophy.” Introducing Buddhism would provide the essential competition to stimulate progress without which Christian civilization could not reach its full potential. “This is one more reason why the promotion of Buddhism in Japan is one of the most pressing needs of the day.”⁷¹ Summarizing his argument for the revitalisation of Buddhism Inoue concluded

Therefore, is it not only Buddhism that can make our country’s scholarship independent in the East, and supersede that of the West? Is it not only Buddhism that will make our country’s doctrines overwhelm the world and swallow the globe? Is it not only Buddhism that can make Japan’s prestige shine throughout the world, and make Japan’s fame resound throughout eternity? Should we not defend this teaching for the sake of the nation? Should we not love this religion for the sake of truth?⁷²

TAKING BUDDHISM TO THE WEST

Whether in response to Inoue’s plea or not, toward the end of the eighteen eighties Japanese Buddhists, led by the Honganji institutions (both Nishi Honganji and Higashi Honganji) developed international contacts. Though there had been informal contact from earlier times (Kasawara Kenjū’s name and address appear in Henry Steel Olcott’s diary for 1884 and Hirai Kinzō appears in 1887) the initiative was formalized with the founding of The Society for Communication with Western

⁷⁰ BKJ, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 372. Though this may seem a particularly beneficent concern, Inoue, like Hirai at the World’s Parliament of Religions, believed that Christianity at its full development, that is, when it had overcome its reliance on myth, mental props such as its concept of Deity and unscientific doctrines, would not be different from Mahāyāna Buddhism. It was an expression of generosity not unlike the Christian missionaries who came to the East “not to destroy but to fulfil.”

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 372–373.

Buddhists (*Ōbei bukkyō tsushinkai*) in 1887 under the leadership of Akamatsu Renjō. A branch office was opened in London in 1890, and a journal, *Bijou of Asia*, was published.⁷³ The arguments of *Revitalizing Buddhism* explain the essential connection between the propagation of Buddhism overseas and the contest of religions within Meiji Japan. It was at least as much a strategy in the discursive contest determining the religious future of Japan as a missionary drive for expansion.⁷⁴ In this context the invitation to the World's Parliament of Religions was an outstanding opportunity. The Parliament provided a chance to speak directly to a select audience of religious specialists, to introduce them to Japanese Mahāyāna, and moreover, offered the opportunity, through the publication of the proceedings, for the reform representation of Buddhism to enter into Western discourse.

CONCLUSION

The apparent paradox in Inoue Enryō's career is that he broke his formal ties with Buddhism in order to promote it. Such was the authority of the West in Japan in the 1880s that even in a time of reaction against excessive Westernization, a time when many Japanese were looking to their indigenous heritage to define a distinctive national identity, Japanese Buddhism had to be validated in the international currency of Western standards. To do this, Inoue adopted the title Philosopher—a distinctively Western title at that time—and with it, the claim to speak on behalf of Buddhism with the voice of unbiased reason.

He used this claim to rational, objective authority to establish the superiority of Buddhist thought by comparison with the standards of

⁷³ Thelle, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Akamatsu, who visited England in 1873, was the first to write on Japanese Buddhism in English. Edward J. Reed, *Japan: Its History, Tradition and Religions*, two volumes (London: John Murray, 1880), includes a section by Akamatsu: a history of Buddhism in Japan and a summary of the principles of the Jōdoshinshū. Akamatsu was an associate of Inoue and shared many of his ideas. Reed comments that Akamatsu found that Jōdoshinshū embraced all that was "good and true in the Christian religion" and was not without hope of seeing England accept this view (pp. 214–215).

⁷⁴ Thelle includes the Japanese Buddhist contact with the Theosophical Society at this time in this overseas missionary effort. However, as I have discussed elsewhere, Olcott's tour was firmly situated within the Japanese discourse. Japanese Buddhists rejected Olcott's offer of propagation through his united Buddhist movement.

universal reason. Inoue used Western philosophical theory to present an analysis of Buddhism. He used the names of Western philosophy to attract the attention of the Western educated elite and the terms of Western philosophy to signpost the less familiar concepts of Buddhist teaching. But Inoue's identity as a philosopher offered more than this. Just as Fenollosa's authority on Western art and aesthetics had been crucial in launching the revival of Japanese art, Inoue's credentials in Western philosophy validated his promotion of Japanese Buddhism. This recourse to Western authority was also a factor in taking Japanese Buddhism to Chicago. Acceptance of Japanese Buddhism in the international, Western and Christian event—or at least the appearance of acceptance—validated the revivalist project. However, regardless of the importance of Western philosophy in Inoue's work, there is no question that what he taught in *Revitalizing Buddhism* was Buddhism. I suggest that Inoue's use of Western philosophy is better understood as a deployment of Western authority. What was important in this exercise was the authority that Western philosophy commanded among Inoue's target audience. The term deployment points to a strategic purpose, in this case Inoue's related projects of recreating a role for Buddhism in modern Japanese society and establishing a relationship between Buddhism and the new Japanese state.