

NEWS & NOTES

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

GREAT AND SMALL THINGS happened in Japan in the year 1995. One of the first was the disastrous Hanshin Earthquake which struck the Kobe-Osaka area on the morning of 17 January 1995, leaving over six thousand people dead and thousands of people homeless. Rescue workers and neighbors worked round the clock in an effort to extricate those trapped in collapsed homes. Volunteer groups, manned by great numbers of young students, formed spontaneously to do what they could to relieve the suffering of the residents. A year later thousands of people still live in emergency shelters, waiting to resume their old lives. We extend our sympathy to the earthquake victims and wish for a swift recovery of the stricken areas.

Japanese terrorists in Tokyo staged an attack on morning commuter trains using a deadly form of nerve gas. Investigation has shown this to be the work of the AUM Shinrikyō religious cult. This wanton act of terrorism has had the unfortunate effect of making the younger generation in Japan suspicious of all religious groups, and has even cast a pall on Japanese religious studies abroad. For responses in English to this incident, see the *Bulletin of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture* 19 (1995).

Various ceremonies observed the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II on August 14, 1945, both here and abroad, but the effects of the war linger on. Responsibility for the war remains an unresolved issue among religious institutions in Japan. Debate also continues as to whether the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which ultimately brought down the curtain on the Pacific War, was justified or not. As Buddhism seeks to orient itself in this nuclear age, it is ironic that Japan's recalcitrant, sodium-spewing fast breeder reactor has been named Monju—Matireya—the future Buddha famed for his wisdom in all things.

Japan's foremost philosopher Nishida Kitarō passed away at age 75 on June 7, 1945, two months before Japan's total surrender. Renewed interest in Nishida's religious philosophy, as well as his disputed political position, has fueled a resurgence in Nishida study. For timely articles, in addition to those found in the present EB, see Yoko Arisaka's study and translation, "The Nishida Enigma," in *Monumenta Nipponica* 51:1, and the studies compiled in James W. Heisig & John C. Maraldo, eds. *Rude Awakenings: Zen, The Kyoto School and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995).

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION

Established just three years ago in 1993 by scholars from Asia and the United States, the new International Association for Asian Philosophy and Religion has already held two conferences in Seoul (1994) and Tokyo (1995) with its third conference to be held in Taipei (1996). The inauguration of the IAAPR is seen as providing a forum in Asia for

NEWS & NOTES

Asian philosophers and scholars of religion to enter into conversation with one another and their counterparts in the West in beginning the task of rethinking Asian traditions in the post-modern, post-colonial situation marked by the end of the Cold War. It is founded on the conviction that in this new world situation, Asian thinkers can and will play an increasingly important role in shaping the direction of global thought in the twenty-first century.

The inaugural meeting of the IAAPR was held in Seoul, Korea, May 26-29, 1994. The theme of the 1994 conference was **RETHINKING TRADITION AND MODERNITY: ASIAN RESPONSES TO THE WEST**. Over 30 scholars from China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the United States gave papers, with a number of additional persons in attendance. Sessions were organized under the rubrics of: "Asian Responses to Modernity"; "Contemporary Reinterpretations of Confucianism"; "Contemporary Chinese Responses to Modernity"; "Korean Buddhist Responses to Modernity"; "The Kyoto School in Asian and Western Perspectives"; "Asian Perspectives on Christian Thought"; "Asian Feminist Religious Responses to Modernity"; and "Global Ethics and Interreligious Dialogue."

The second annual meeting of the IAAPR was held in Tokyo, Japan, June 1-3, 1995. The theme of the 1995 conference was **ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTHER: ASIA AND THE WEST**. Over 40 scholars from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the United States gave papers, again with a number of additional persons in attendance. Sessions were organized under the headings of: "Cross-Cultural Encounters, Asia and the West"; "Encounters of Religion and Modernity"; "Buddhist-Christian Encounters"; "Cultural Encounters East and West"; and "Encounters in Philosophy East and West."

The third annual meeting of the IAAPR will be held in Taipei May 30-June 2. The theme of the 1996 conference theme is **DIALOGUE AND CRITIQUE: TOWARDS 21ST C. ASIAN CULTURES**. The conference will focus on such topics as: Critical dialogue between local or regional Asian traditions; critical dialogue between specific Asian and Western traditions; environmental and gender issues in Asian and Western culture and thought; and critical reviews of current developments in Asian thought. Those interested in participating or attending should contact: Dr. Chen-kuo Lin, Dept of Philosophy, National Chengchi University, Taipei 116, Taiwan: tel: 886-2-939-8535; fax: 886-2-939-0514; e-mail: cklin@cc.nccu.edu.tw; or Thomas Dean, Dept of Religion, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA: tel: 215-204-7923; fax: 610-617-0837; e-mail: tjdean@astro.ocis.temple.edu.

CCSBS SYMPOSIUM IN BERKELEY

The Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies (Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley) will sponsor a symposium September 13-15, 1996, on the theme, "Toward a Contemporary Understanding of Pure Land Buddhism." The symposium will focus on a book of essays written in a conversational process by Pure Land Buddhists and Western scholars of religion and edited by Dennis Hirota. Panelists will include: Profs. John B. Carman, John Ross Carter, John B. Cobb, Dennis Hirota, Thomas P. Kasulis, Gordon D. Kaufman, Ann T. Rogers, Musashi Tachikawa, Taitetsu Unno, and John Yokota. Interested persons should contact Rev. David Matsumoto, Director,

NEWS & NOTES

Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies, 1900 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.

D. T. SUZUKI-RELATED NEWS

A complete bibliography of all known D. T. Suzuki's journal and newspaper publications has been laboriously compiled by Professor Kirita Kiyohide of Hanazono University, Kyoto, and published in the university bulletin: see Kirita, Kiyohide, "A Chronological Bibliography on D. T. Suzuki's Articles Published in Magazines and Newspapers," in *Bulletin of the Faculty of Letters, Hanazono University*, No. 27 (March 1995), pp. 151-224. As indicated by the sheer length of this bibliography, Suzuki produced a prodigious number of works to support his career as a writer in both the English-speaking world and the Japanese. While the present bibliography does not list his booklength works (for reason of space), the journal and newspaper publications are of importance since they were often compiled into book form later on. We can thus trace the development of his thought in greater detail through these writings. After spending several years tracking down the materials in their original form and comparing them with the Japanese materials in the 32-volume *Suzuki Daisetsu Zenshū* (Collected Works of D. T. Suzuki), the compiler discovered there were a large number of items that had been left out of the Collected Works. It is hoped that a new edition of Suzuki's works in Japanese *and* in English will one day be made available.

Reverend Sasaki Yōdō, Chief Abbot of the Tenryūji, has published a Japanese translation of D. T. Suzuki and Huston Smith's "A Conversation with Daisetsu Suzuki," in the January 1996 issue of *Zen Bunka* [Zen Culture], No. 159, pp. 88-97, issued by the Institute of Zen Culture, Hanazono University, Kyoto. This is the edited transcript of the 1956 NBC documentary that appeared as one chapter in *Wisdom for Our Time*, edited by James Nelson (W. W. Norton: New York, 1961). As the translator observes, it will be interesting to see the reaction of Japanese readers to Suzuki's presentation of Zen to the Western world.

Suzuki readers may also be interested to learn of the recent translation by Andrew Bernstein of D. T. Suzuki's essays on Emanuel Swedenborg, in *Swedenborg: Buddha of the North*, published by Swedenborg Foundation, West Chester, PA, 1996. Suzuki translated several of Swedenborg's works into Japanese and is regarded as the person who introduced Swedenborg's thought to Japan. Bernstein's work represents the most substantial translation of Suzuki's Japanese works since the 1972 translation of *Japanese Spirituality*.

NEWS & NOTES welcomes informative news items from readers. Materials will be subjected to selection and editing. Please address submissions to the journal secretary.