

The Essentials of Salvation: *A Study* of Genshin's *Ōjōyōshū*

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NAMU AMIDA BUTSU. Among practices for rebirth, *nembutsu* is fundamental.

Hōnen—preface to the *Senchaku bongan nembutsu shū*.

To those even slightly acquainted with Pure Land Buddhist thought, the above quotation will seem a truism. “Of course,” we tend to think, “for Pure Land Buddhists *nembutsu*¹ is the standard form of religious observance.” Prior to Hōnen, however, this was not so apparent. Hōnen (1133–1212), the great saint and founder of an independent Pure Land movement, wrote his greatest work, the *Senchaku bongan nembutsu shū* (*Treatise on the Selected Nembutsu of the Original Vow*), primarily to substantiate this position. In the tenth century, two centuries before Hōnen, the role and importance of *nembutsu* were even less apparent. What constitutes *nembutsu*? Is it properly a form of meditation, and if so, meditation on what? Does it include calling the name of Amida Buddha—*Namu Amida Butsu*²—or is this insufficient for winning rebirth in

¹ For Chinese and Japanese characters, see the Chinese-Japanese Character List on page 88. *Nembutsu* literally means to think or dwell on (*nen*) the Buddha (*butsu*). In actual usage the term covers a very wide range of practices from deep meditation to invocation of a Buddha's name. On the origin of *nembutsu* and its development in China, see A. Andrews, “Nembutsu in the Chinese Pure Land Tradition,” *The Eastern Buddhist*, III, No. 2 (Oct. 1970), 20–46.

² *Namu* was originally a salutation of respect or adoration (Skt., *namas*). In the invocation, “*Namu Amida Butsu*,” it primarily functions as a sacralizing or “numinizing” utterance and has only an approximate verbal meaning. It is variously translated as “homage to,” “reverence to,” “hail,” and so forth.

Amida is the Japanese name of the Buddha Amitābha or Amitāyus, the Buddha of boundless light and life.

Amida's Pure Land? Does nembutsu require supporting practices or attitudes? What kind of sentient being can benefit from nembutsu? What is the reason for the efficacy of nembutsu? These were a few of the questions—questions of vital, existential import—which required solution before “Namu Amida Butsu; among practices for rebirth, nembutsu is fundamental,” could become the rallying cry to salvation of a new age. The work which provided answers to these and other questions crucial for Pure Land faith, and thus prepared for the epochal achievements of Hōnen, was the *Ōjōyōshū* (*Essentials of Salvation*)³ of the Tendai priest Genshin.

Genshin's Life and Works

Genshin was born in 942 A.D. in Taima, a small village situated about a day's journey south of the capital, Kyoto. His mother is said to have been of the Minamoto family, provincial aristocrats, and a fervent Pure Land believer. His father apparently died when Genshin was still quite young, and Genshin is thought to have joined the priesthood at Mount Hiei, the home of Tendai Buddhism, when he was only nine. It is recorded that he was formally ordained in 945 at the age of thirteen, and became a disciple of Ryōgen, the then eighteenth high bishop of the Tendai sect.

A certain amount of romance has crept into Genshin's biographies. It is recorded in some considerably late biographies that at the age of fifteen he delivered a sermon before the Emperor at the Imperial Palace to the spiritual and aesthetic edification of all present and received many fine presents which he sent to his mother. His mother, however, is said to have refused these and to have castigated the young priest for harboring worldly ambitions. Thereupon, according to the legend, Genshin retired to the secluded Yokawa area of Mount Hiei to devote his life to scholarship and meditation.

Some facts are certain. By 967, perhaps earlier, Genshin had indeed retired to Yokawa. In 973, 974, and 984 he officiated at important Tendai functions. And between the eleventh month of 984 and the fourth month of 985, at the age of forty-four, he composed the *Ōjōyōshū*. To have done so in only five months bespeaks a remarkable genius.

In 986, Genshin helped form a devotional association known as the Nem-

³ Literally, “Collection of Essential Passages on Rebirth.”

butsu Society of Twenty-five (*Nijūgo Zammai E*). Patterned after Hui-yüan's White Lotus Society,⁴ it was the first genuine nembutsu society in Japan. The twenty-five members, both clergy and laymen, met on the eve of the fifteenth of every month, listened to a short lecture on the *Lotus Sutra*, and passed the night in nembutsu. Intended as a religious fraternity as well as a devotional society, the members took vows to be spiritual brothers to one another, especially tending one another at times of sickness or death, assisting at prayer and nembutsu, and aiding one another in every way, in this and all future lives, to achieve Pure Land salvation and Buddhahood. It is thought that the *Ōjōyōshū* was composed as a devotional guide for the members of this society.

In 987 the *Ōjōyōshū* was sent to the T'ien-t'ai headquarters in China where it won great acclaim. In 1004 Genshin was promoted to the rank of Gon Shōsōzu⁵ by the government, becoming one of the highest ranking prelates in the land, though in his age the position had become merely honorific. His official title became Eshin Sōzu Genshin. The following year he resigned the title and position, and apparently devoted the remaining years of his life to his devotions and studies. He died at the age of seventy-six on the tenth day of the sixth month of 1017, a date still marked by an annual ceremony at Mount Hiei's Yokawa.

Genshin is credited with an enormous number of works. The Tendai edition of Genshin's complete works (the *Eshin Sōzu Zenshū*) contains eighty-two works, and an additional seventy-eight works are ascribed to him in various catalogues. Which of these works are genuinely Genshin's is difficult to say. Many, if not most, are probably works in his tradition, but not actually his. By their titles, only some twenty of these works can be identified as Pure Land works. Indeed, while he is most famous for his Pure Land teachings, Genshin's actual career and larger body of writings identify him as an orthodox Tendai cleric and thinker, though a very great one. Some of his Tendai works offer real contributions to Tendai thought, and he founded one of the two Tendai

⁴ For details on this and other events and personages of the Chinese Pure Land tradition, see Andrews, "Nembutsu in China."

⁵ This title is really untranslatable, though we might render it, "Provisional Lesser Vicar General."

doctrinal schools, the Eshin Branch. He was also famous as a scholar of Hossō or Yogācāra thought. His age was one in which a position of multiple faith was common and Genshin embraced several with equal sincerity and genius.

The relation between Genshin's Tendai and Pure Land positions is a difficult problem. In the *Ōjōyōshū* the Tendai position is subordinated to the goal of Pure Land salvation. Yet in a sister work, the *Kanjin ryaku yōshū* (*Essentials of Self-insight*), the Pure Land position is subordinated to the Tendai goal of immediate self-realization. Speaking from the point of view of the development of Japanese Buddhism, however, there is no doubt that the *Ōjōyōshū* is Genshin's most important work and his Pure Land thought his greatest contribution. It has also been one of the most popular works in Japanese literary history. It was one of the first works to be printed (block printed) in Japan, and has undergone some twenty-six printed editions, guiding many generations of readers toward the goal of Pure Land salvation.⁶

The Ōjōyōshū

The *Ōjōyōshū* is a work comprising some eighty thousand Chinese characters divided into ten chapters. The first three chapters describe the miseries of samsaric existence and the pleasures of Amida Buddha's Pure Land, and the remaining treat of various aspects of nembutsu. In format the work is an annotated anthology. Each chapter begins with a short general introduction and then proceeds to detailed exposition by means of a series of quotations from the Buddhist scriptures tied together by Genshin's comments and interpretations. In all, 654 scriptural passages are quoted or paraphrased and 255 others cited, drawing on a total of 160 different works.⁷ The main portion of each chapter is generally followed by a series of questions and answers, also utilizing scriptural quotes, which attempt to resolve certain difficulties or enlarge upon certain subjects.

Thus the *Ōjōyōshū* is a voluminous compendium of scriptural wisdom on Pure

⁶ We have used the definitive edition of Hanayama Shinshō, *Gempon kōchū kanwa taishō Ōjōyōshū* (The *Ōjōyōshū*; A New Edition Thoroughly Collated with Parallel Kambun and Wabun), Tokyo, Koyama Shoten, 1937.

⁷ See Hanayama, *Ōjōyōshū*, NOTES, pp. 33f.

Land themes. It was uniquely pivotal in the development of a Japanese Pure Land movement. Besides bringing together in an easily accessible form Pure Land teachings from virtually the entire Chinese Buddhist canon, it introduced works and ideas of Chinese Pure Land thinkers which proved crucial for the development of the Japanese Pure Land movement. In addition, the *Ōjōyōshū* organized into a coherent system the wealth of doctrine and practical techniques it had gathered from the scriptures, providing later Japanese thinkers with a fund of Pure Land concepts and categories as a base upon which to build. Finally, the *Ōjōyōshū* introduced and helped make acceptable to Japan certain new and highly significant concerns, such as with the efficacy of invocational nembutsu and the possibility of Pure Land salvation for the ordinary man. In all of these ways, the *Ōjōyōshū* performed a function crucial to the growth of a Pure Land movement in Japan. It introduced important Pure Land texts and ideas to Japan, it created a coherent system of Pure Land theory and practice, and it pointed out the areas which were to become of concern to the later independent Pure Land movement. In what follows, we will examine the most important teachings of the *Ōjōyōshū* and then discuss the structuring of doctrine and practice it achieves.

The Preface

The *Ōjōyōshū* opens with this general Preface:

The teaching and practice for rebirth into the Land of Utter Bliss are the eyes and limbs of this defiled latter age. Cleric, layman, noble, or commoner—who is there who would not take refuge in it? Moreover, the texts of the exoteric and esoteric teachings are not few, and their practices, both relative and ultimate, are many. Those who are intelligent and diligent may not find them difficult, but how can one dull as I dare even attempt them? Thus I have collected a few essential passages from the scriptures on the single way of nembutsu. When one studies these and practices according to them they will be easy to understand and easy to carry out. Altogether there are ten chapters in three volumes: 1) Shunning the Defiled Realm; 2) Seeking the Pure Land; 3) Authorities for the Pure Land; 4) The Proper Practice of Nembutsu; 5) Aids to Nembutsu; 6) Nembutsu for Special Occasions; 7) The Benefits of Nem-

butsu; 8) The Authorities for Nembutsu; 9) Sundry Practices for Rebirth; and 10) Discussion of Problems.

These I place to my right that I forget them not.

Part of the greatness and appeal of the *Ōjōyōshū* lies in the sincere humility of its author and his deep sympathy and concern for human suffering and salvation. Here in the Preface we find a great prelate of the age, an eminent doctor in the rich and aged tradition of the Tendai, a man renowned for his learning and discipline, abandoning all pride and seeking salvation in the easy way of Pure Land rebirth, and moreover, setting out to help others find the same salvation. This deep concern, both personal and humanitarian, is constantly reflected in the at once fervid and practical tone of the *Ōjōyōshū*.

In the Preface we may discern Genshin's intentions for the *Ōjōyōshū*. We see first that it is to be concerned with Pure Land salvation only. The more difficult, more prestigious ways are to be abandoned as unsuitable to the times and the capacities of most men. Secondly, we find that it will offer a universally inclusive way to its goal within the capability of all, even laymen and commoners, both the dull and the indolent. And thirdly, we are told that passages from the scriptures on the best means to this goal—the easy practice of nembutsu—are to be set down. Inherent here are the three soteriological principles fundamental to the *Ōjōyōshū*: The goal of salvation is to be exclusively Pure Land rebirth, the subjects of salvation are *all* men, and the best means to arrive at salvation is nembutsu, the easy practice. These are all principles of a thorough and genuine Pure Land faith.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3

The first three chapters of the *Ōjōyōshū* are preliminary. Their function is to instill the basic existential attitudes necessary for dedicated nembutsu. Before one can begin seriously to cultivate nembutsu he must be given a correct understanding of the true nature of samsaric existence. Genshin attempts this in Chapter 1, "Shunning the Defiled Realm." Summarizing the teachings of various scriptures, he leads us on a grisly tour through the six transmigratory paths of sentient existence—through the eight scorching, screeching chambers of *Hell*, the ghostly, pitious world of the *Famished Spirits* (*gaki*), the brutal and dumb world of *Beasts*, the mad and furious battlefields of

the *Raging Spirits* (*ashura*), the anguish and evanescence of *Human Life*, and finally through the *Heavens of the Gods*, where, when at last the gods grow old and begin to contemplate their imminent return to lower forms of existence, they suffer in inverse proportion to their former bliss.

If one has come to understand and conceive a deep aversion for sentient existence, the next prerequisite for serious cultivation of nembutsu is an attraction to Amida Buddha's Pure Land. In Chapter 2, "Seeking the Pure Land," with the same vivid realism used to depict the sufferings of transmigration, Genshin portrays the ten beatitudes of Pure Land rebirth: 1) receiving upon death the welcome of Amida and his host of bodhisattvas; 2) being reborn from a lotus blossom into the Pure Land; 3) receiving the Buddha-marks and the five supernatural powers; 4) enjoying the Pure Land's adornments; 5) enjoying the adornments and supernatural powers perpetually; 6) guiding and saving all former friends, benefactors, and relatives in whatever paths of samsara they may suffer; 7) enjoying the fellowship of all the holy beings of the Pure Land; 8) beholding Amida Buddha and hearing the dharma; 9) being able to worship in person Amida and all the Buddhas of the ten directions; and 10) speedily progressing on the path to certain Buddhahood.

Chapter 3, "Authorities for the Pure Land," is corollary to Chapter 2. In Chapter 2 we were urged to desire the Pure Land of Amida because of its vast superiority over sentient existence. In Chapter 3, Genshin attempts to show that it is superior also to all the other pure lands and heavens of the universe. First he appeals to scripture, showing that Amida and his land are praised in more scriptures than any other Buddha or land. Finally, he admits that all Buddhas and Buddha-lands are ultimately identical, but asserts that the beings of our world and age have a special karmic affinity (*innen*)—a joint spiritual destiny—with Amida Buddha.

It is unfortunate that limitations of space preclude doing justice to the power and poetry of these first chapters.⁸ These beginning chapters were and remain

⁸ For an English translation of Chapters 1 and 2, see A. K. Reischauer, "Genshin's Ōjō Yōshū: Collected Essays on Birth into Paradise," in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 2nd Series, VII (1930), 16–98. There are also some excerpts from these chapters in *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, ed. by R. Tsunoda *et al.*, 2 vols., New York, Columbia University Press, 1964, I, 192–97.

by far the best known and most popular portion of the *Ōjōyōshū*. Modern Japanese who know of the *Ōjōyōshū* usually know of it merely as the book describing hell and paradise. In ages past, often sensationally illustrated with gory views of the six paths and tantalizing glimpses of the Pure Land, these chapters were vastly influential in popularizing the Buddhist conception of hell, Buddhist anthropology and cosmology, Amida's Pure Land, and also the principle of karmic retribution. In fact, the *Ōjōyōshū* may be thought of as two books: one, a popular tract which instilled generations of readers with a dread fear of the retributions of hell and often a longing for Amida's land, preparing the way for the Kamakura Period (1192-1333) evangelists, and the other, a bulky, learned treatise on nembutsu which dominated Pure Land thought from the time of its composition until Hōnen.

Chapter 4, The Proper Practice of Nembutsu

Chapter 4, where we will begin our survey of the nembutsu teachings of the *Ōjōyōshū*, is the most important chapter of the work. Here Genshin sets out what he considers to be correct and orthodox nembutsu. As such he proposes the fivefold nembutsu of the *Pure Land Shastra** attributed to Vasubandhu: 1) nembutsu-veneration, 2) nembutsu-praise, 3) nembutsu-aspiration, 4) nembutsu-contemplation, and 5) nembutsu-dedication**.

As *nembutsu-veneration* the aspirant of Pure Land salvation is instructed to:

Take refuge in Him single-mindedly. Throw yourself—knees, arms, and forehead—to the ground and venerate Amida Buddha far off in the West. Consider not the more or less of your practice; just be of sincere heart.

We can imagine the silent worshipper, before a serene image in a dusky chapel, gracefully kneeling and lowering his head to the floor again and again in deep devotion and aspiration.

For the second element, *nembutsu-praise*, Genshin urges the aspirant to sing certain hymns in homage of Amida, praising, for instance, Amida's vows, his light, his Buddha-marks, and so forth. Genshin concludes:

* *Jōdo ron*, *Muryōju kyō Ubadaisha ganshō ge*

** raihai mon 禮拜門, sandan mon 讚歎門, sagan mon 作願門, kanzatsu mon 觀察門, and ekō mon 廻向門

One verse or many, one time or often, you must only be sincere. Consider not more or less. Even if you perform no other works, by means of this your praise, and in accordance with your aspiration, you will surely attain to rebirth. As the *Lotus Sutra* verse tells us, "If with a glad heart you sing out and praise the merit of a Buddha, even with so much as a single tone, without fail you will finally perfect Buddhahood." If by one sound, how much the more so by constant praise! If to Buddhahood, how much the more so to rebirth!

The *Ōjōyōshū*'s prescription for *nembutsu-aspiration*, the third element of the fivefold nembutsu, is radically different from its traditional form in the Vasubandhu *Pure Land Shastra*. It is transformed through a rich Mahayana interpretation into a skillful synthesis of Pure Land and Tendai elements characteristic of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s formulation of nembutsu in general. For Genshin the Tendai doctor, nembutsu-aspiration meant not merely fervent desire for rebirth, but also "arousing the thought of *bodhi*," that is, of enlightenment (*botsu bodai shin*). A traditional and virtually universal Buddhist doctrine, arousing the thought of bodhi means to perceive, or perhaps to intuit, however dimly, the possibility, which is to say, the inevitability, of one's own enlightenment and Buddhahood. It is the moment of true conversion, when one becomes a genuine Buddhist, comes to realize and long for one's true destiny, comes to take the first step on the bodhisattva path of total self-sacrifice and heroic endeavor. The outer, public form of this event is the formal assumption of a set of traditional vows, the Four Universal Bodhisattva Vows:

However innumerable beings are, I vow to save them;
 However inexhaustible the passions are, I vow to extinguish them;
 However immeasurable the Dharmas are, I vow to master them;
 However incomparable the Buddha truth is, I vow to attain it.⁹

These four vows Genshin enjoins on all who aspire to Pure Land rebirth.

Yet for Genshin the Pure Land teacher, arousing the thought of bodhi had an

⁹ This English rendering is by D. T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, London, Rider and Co., 1950, p. 14.

additional dimension. He enjoined that the vows be taken in a characteristically Pure Land way. The Pure Land Buddhist is to embrace all beings in bodhisattva compassion and seek their rebirth into Amida's Pure Land, there together to realize the highest Buddhahood. Genshin offers the following interpretation by the Chinese master Tao-ch'ō of the relation between arousing the thought of bodhi and aspiration for Pure Land rebirth:

In [T'an-luan's commentary to] the *Pure Land Shāstra* it says, "Arousing the thought of bodhi is to aspire to Buddhahood; to aspire to Buddhahood is to aspire to save all beings; to aspire to save all beings is to aspire to embrace all sentient beings and bring them to rebirth in a Buddha-land." As we now aspire to be reborn in the Pure Land, we should first arouse the thought of bodhi.¹⁰

In this way a Pure Land devotional form is enriched by being set in a classic Buddhist framework, and further, a possible mode of accommodation is reached between Tendai orthodoxy and a Pure Land faith new to Japan.

Nembutsu-contemplation is the central constituent of the fivefold nembutsu. Moreover it introduces the types of nembutsu basic to the *Ōjōyōshū*'s nembutsu formulation, the primary material to be elaborated on in later chapters. Three categories of nembutsu are described which the practitioner is to utilize at his own discretion: 1) Buddha-mark-contemplation, 2) general Buddha-contemplation, and 3) simplified Buddha-contemplation.*

Buddha-mark-contemplation.—According to traditional Buddhology, all Buddhas are distinguished by a number of remarkable physical characteristics, the Buddha-marks. Conventionally, there are thirty-two major marks and eighty minor ones or in hyperbolic expression, eighty-four thousand of each. Con-

¹⁰ T'an-luan (476–542) was one of the first Chinese teachers to dedicate himself wholly to Pure Land faith. He wrote an important commentary on the Vasubandhu *Pure Land Shāstra*, the *Wang-sheng lun chu* or *Ōjō ron chū*, T. (*Taishō daizōkyō* text number) 1819. Tao-ch'ō (562–645) was T'an-luan's spiritual successor and also one of the great Chinese Pure Land masters. The quotation here is from his very influential *Treatise on the Land of Peace and Bliss* (*An-lo chi*, *Anraku shū* T. 1958), which the *Ōjōyōshū* introduced to Japan Pure Land Buddhists. See Andrews, "Nembutsu in China," pp. 39–41.

* *Bessō kan* 別相觀, *Sōsō kan* 總相觀, and *Zōryaku kan* 雜略觀

templation of these was a standard and popular form of meditation in both India and China. This was a rather technical exercise, the Buddha—not always Amida—being generally considered more an object of contemplation than of devotion. Genshin urges contemplation—that is, meditative envisualization—of forty-two various marks of Amida Buddha, describing each in detail, and listing also the karmic benefits of each contemplation. Here are his instructions for contemplation on the first of the Buddha-marks:

Next, properly contemplate the Buddha-marks. That is, contemplate Amida Buddha sitting on his lotus dais, the marks brightly adorning his body.

1) The fleshy topknot: There is no one who can actually see this. It appears high and round like a heavenly parasol. Those who wish to contemplate it in detail should contemplate like this: Above this topknot is a great aureola of a thousand colors. Each color produces eighty-four thousand rays of light and in each ray there are eighty-four thousand rays of light and in each ray there are eighty-four thousand apparition-Buddhas. Above the topknot of each apparition-Buddha there is also an aureola. The various rays follow one upon another reaching to the countless worlds of the ten directions. Moreover in the ten directions there are apparition-bodhisattvas who descend like clouds and surround the apparition-Buddhas. (The *Daishū kyō* says, "Those who revere mother and father, teachers and masters will gain the fleshy topknot Buddha-mark." Those who rejoice in this mark will annul one hundred billion kalpas of extremely heavy bad karma and will not fall into the three evil paths.)¹¹

The succeeding marks are described in similar detail. The complete Buddha-mark-contemplation consists of contemplating forty-two marks, from the topknot on the Buddha's head to the dharma-wheels on the soles of his feet, and then back again to the head in reverse order, and this repeatedly for a total of sixteen times. As we pointed out, this is a rather technical, formal meditation, especially when compared to the more devotional, more thoroughly Pure Land types of nembutsu which are to follow.

¹¹ Quoted passages in parentheses are Genshin's interlinear notes.

General Buddha-contemplation.—The second category of nembutsu-contemplation, general Buddha-contemplation, is intended to function either as a continuation of, or an alternative to, Buddha-mark-contemplation. It includes two quite different types of meditative nembutsu: Contemplation on the phenomenal aspects or the appearance of Amida Buddha, and contemplation of his noumenal aspect or ultimate nature*. Here is the contemplation on the phenomenal Buddha:

Second is general Buddha-contemplation. First, contemplate a great lotus blossom adorned with many treasures as above. Next, contemplate Amida Buddha seated on the blossom. His body is golden like the sands of the Jambu River and as many *yojanas* tall as the sands of sixty trillion *nayutas* of Ganges Rivers.¹² The luminous tuft of white hair between his brows curls to the right like five Mount Sumerus. His eyes are as pure blue and bright as the water of the four great seas. The brilliance from the pores of his body is like Mount Sumeru. His aureola is as broad as ten billion great-thousand-worlds and within its brilliance are an infinite Ganges Rivers' sands of apparition-Buddhas. Each apparition-Buddha has innumerable bodhisattva attendants. There are eighty-four thousand major Buddha-marks as marvellous as these, and each has eighty-four thousand minor marks. Each minor mark also has eighty-four thousand rays and each ray shines on the nembutsu practitioners of all the worlds in the ten directions of the universe, taking them in and never abandoning them. This we must realize: Each Buddha-mark has seventy billion five hundred and six million rays of light flashing forth brilliantly with a holy glory like the golden king of mountains rising from a great ocean. The light is filled with innumerable apparition-Buddhas and bodhisattvas revealing their supernatural powers and surrounding Amida Buddha. Thus that Buddha with His infinite meritorious Buddha-marks like these presides within the congre-

* *jikan* 事観 and *rikan* 理観

¹² A *yojana* is thought to have been about nine miles, and a *nayuta* is equivalent to one hundred billion.

gation of bodhisattvas preaching the good Dharma. At this time the practitioner should not be aware of any other appearances; neither Mount Sumeru nor its encircling mountains, neither the great ocean, the rivers, the terrain, nor the trees should appear. Only Amida Buddha's Buddha-marks and His encircling Jambu River and golden light should fill his eyes. It should be just as in the kalpa of the great flood when the worlds are filled with water and the ten thousand things therein are engulfed and appear not, and only a vast expanse of water is seen. The Buddha's light should be like this also. This light of the Buddha-marks even reaches beyond all the worlds and there is no place that it does not radiantly illumine. When with the spiritual eye we practitioners see ourselves also, we too will be in the saving illumination of that light. (The above was according to the *Meditation Sutra*, the *Two-Volume Sutra*, the *Seeing All Buddhas Samadhi Sutra*, the *Mahā prajñā pāramitā śāstra*, and others.)

This is traditional contemplative nembutsu. The practitioner longs to behold the compassionate light of Amida and find himself illumined in its holy effulgence which annuls his bad karma and assures him of salvation through rebirth in Amida Buddha's Pure Land of Utter Bliss.

The contemplation on the absolute Buddha has two stages: contemplation on the triple Buddha-body¹³ of Amida, and contemplation on the triple Buddha-body as Emptiness-Existence-Middle Truth (*Kū-Ke-Chū*), the Tendai formula expressive of ultimate reality. Here is that on the triple-body:

(When you have perfected this [previous] contemplation you may if you like proceed to the following.) You should contemplate like this. That Buddha is the three Buddha-bodies in one. One of these bodies [the apparition-body] is seen differently by different beings. Sometimes it is one *jō* six *shaku*, sometimes eight *shaku*, sometimes a

¹³ Three ontological states of Buddhahood (*nirmāṇa kāya*, *sambhoga kāya*, and *Dharma kāya*; *ke shin*, *bō shin*, and *bossin*). The apparition-body is a historical Buddha or an apparition of a recompense or Dharma-Buddha. The body of recompense is a Buddha in all the splendor and salvic power earned by, or recompensed for, his immense quantity of good works. Amida is usually considered to be such a Buddha. A Dharma-body is a Buddha in his absolute aspect, unconditioned, infinite, and eternal.

vast body.¹⁴ But all appearances are golden colored and the merit of each is immeasurable. His phenomenal nature (*ji*) is identical with that of all other Buddhas. (This was the apparition-body.)

Next, each buddha-mark [of the body of recompense] is far beyond beings and bodhisattvas; even Brahmā cannot see His topknot-mark, nor Moggallāna exhaust His voice. He is the formless, ultimate essence, the unadorned adorned, replete with the ten realizations, four self-assurances, three imperturbabilities, the Great Compassion, the eighty-four thousand samadhis, the eighty-four thousand *pāramitās* and other dharma as inexhaustable as the sands of the River Ganges. His mind (*i*) is identical with that of all other Buddhas. (This was the body of recompense.)

The subtle, pure Dharma-body possesses all the Buddha-marks. Each mark is Suchness. This Suchness Dharma-realm is consummate with no deficiencies. There is no production, no passing away, neither past nor future; it is not one, not different, neither discontinuous nor continuous. Both conditioned and unconditioned merit is always pure because of this Dharma-body. His essence (*tai*) is identical with that of all other Buddhas. (This was the Dharma-body.)

This contemplation proceeds directly into the second stage, that on the triple-body of Amida as Emptiness-Existence-Middle Truth.¹⁵ It concludes in this manner:

Therefore, this we must realize: The Buddha-marks which we contemplate are the marks and light of the three Buddha-bodies in one, are the marks and light of all identical essence Buddhas, are the immeasurable merit, perfect harmony marks and light. Because form

¹⁴ A *shaku* is equivalent to about one foot or thirty centimeters, and a *jō* is ten *shaku*.

¹⁵ The formulation Emptiness-Existence-Middle Truth is the invention of Chih-i (538–597), the founder of the T'ien-t'ai sect. The terms Emptiness and Existence are drawn from the Mādhyamika characterization of reality as either Empty (*śūnya*) or phenomenally existent (*samvṛti*), depending on whether it is considered from the point of view of absolute truth or relative truth, respectively. To these two terms, Chih-i added the term Middle truth to express the identity of the first two terms, or aspects of reality, as well as the transcendence over dichotomizing intellect of the truth which they mutually express.

is Emptiness, it is called Suchness; because Emptiness is form, it is called the marks and light. There is nothing, not a single shape, not a single scent, which is not the Middle Truth. Feeling, perception, impulse, and consciousness are like this also. Both our three evil paths and Amida's immeasurable merit are from the beginning nirvanic, one, and unobstructed.

We entreat that we may gain Buddhahood and become the equal of the sacred Dharma King. (The above was according to the *Meditation Sutra*, the *Heart Contemplation Sutra*, the *Golden Splendor Sutra*, the *Bodhisattva Nembutsu-samadhi Sutra*, the *Prajñā pāramitā sūtras*, the *Great Quiescence and Insight*, et cetera.)

Within Genshin's Tendai tradition, this kind of meditation—known as nembutsu-samadhi or *kambutsu-samadhi* (*kam* or *kan* meaning contemplation)—was the highest form of religious endeavor. When perfected it was thought to culminate in perfect insight and Buddhahood.

Simplified Buddha-contemplation.—The forms of nembutsu presented thus far have progressed in three stages of increasing difficulty and profundity. Under the category of simplified Buddha-contemplation, we are now given a series of four successively simpler and easier alternative methods of nembutsu. The first method is contemplation in some detail of Amida's wisdom-eye Buddha-mark (*byakugō sō*) in a manner similar to the Buddha-mark-contemplation described above. In the second method the aspirant is to contemplate his own rebirth into the Pure Land, praying with a joyous heart, "May I, together with all beings, be reborn into the Land of Peace and Bliss." The third alternative is said to be for those who desire an extremely simple form:

Those who desire an extremely simple practice should think like this: "That Buddha's luminous tuft of hair curls round like a gem of crystal. Its brilliance shines everywhere and takes us up [into its saving illumination]." And they should pray: "May I together with all other beings be born into that land."

This seems to be a reduction to the simplest form possible of contemplative (meditative envisualizing) nembutsu.

The final option is for those quite incapable of contemplative nembutsu:

If there are those who are incapable of contemplating (*kannen*) the Buddha-marks, they should single-mindedly call and think on the Buddha (*shōnen*), while dwelling on taking refuge in Him, on His coming to welcome them, or on rebirth. (In the preceding, because there are various propensities, we have presented various contemplations.) Whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying, while speaking or in silence, whatever you may be doing, always keep the thought in your breast like a starving man thinks of food or a thirsting man seeks water. Bow your head, raise your hands, or lift up your voice calling the sacred name. But whatever your outer acts may be, keep the thought (*nen*) constantly in your heart. *Nen* and *nen* continuously and sleeping or waking forget it not.

Here we have the single most important and difficult passage in the *Ōjōyō-shū*. Considering the place of the Pure Land Buddhist tradition within the history of Buddhism and the range of Buddhist sectarian differences, it would seem that its real significance has lain in its capacity to elicit popular adherence, its ability to bring the ideals, the values, and the salvation of Buddhism to the common people. In China, Pure Land faith underwent a gradual popularization influenced by certain great teachers who were deeply concerned for the salvation of ordinary laymen and who developed simplified teachings and practices suitable for such folk. In Japan the course of development was similar, if much later, and in this passage we have one of the crucial turning points in the popularization of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism. After having enjoined various kinds of meditative nembutsu, Genshin here urges those incapable of contemplation to "call and think on the Buddha," to "lift up your voice calling the sacred name." He urges those who cannot accomplish the more difficult forms of nembutsu to call the name of the Buddha with the sacred formula, *Namu Amida Butsu*. That is, he urges invocational nembutsu.

This is a somewhat controversial interpretation,¹⁶ but let us consider the

¹⁶ The Tendai scholastic tradition maintains that this passage teaches contemplative nembutsu.

crucial term *shōnen*, translated above as call and think on the Buddha. *Shō* of *shōnen* means to praise, designate, or call. It is the term used in the famous passage of the *Meditation Sutra*¹⁷ urging the lowest grade of being to invoke Amida with the sacred formula, *Namu Amida Butsu*. *Shō* undoubtedly has the same meaning here; it indicates vocal or invocational nembutsu. *Nen* of *shōnen* means, of course, to think, dwell on, be mindful of. If we compare *shōnen* with *kannen* (contemplation), as found in the phrase, "If there are those who are incapable of contemplating," we see that the alteration of just this one character—*shō* for *kan*—tends to effect a radical shift of cultus away from the more difficult, clerical practice of contemplation towards the easier, lay oriented practice of invocational nembutsu.

However, when we examine the context of *shōnen* we see that it still retains a certain contemplative dimension. The practitioner must "call and think" while "dwelling on" (*sō, omou*)—we might even say envisioning—taking refuge in the Buddha, the Buddha's welcome at the time of death, or his own rebirth. Moreover, Genshin's interlinear note apparently includes *shōnen* in its summary as one of simplified Buddha-contemplation's "various contemplations." Yet this contemplative dimension does not alter the fact that *shōnen* indicates a type of nembutsu which is primarily invocational.

Thus within the fivefold nembutsu, as the nembutsu practice for less capable beings, Genshin urges a type of invocational nembutsu which consists of fervidly and constantly calling and thinking on the Buddha. And we might add that the tone of deep concern and urgency here probably contributed not a little to convincing Hōnen and others that in this passage was indeed to be found one of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s most important teachings.

Finally, as *nembutsu-dedication*, the fifth and last element of the fivefold nembutsu, the aspirant is instructed to dedicate (literally, direct) all of the karmic merit from his nembutsu practice to the common rebirth of himself and all other beings, rather than to any other spiritual goal (such as immediate enlightenment) or to any worldly end.

This temporarily concludes our examination of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s Chapter 4, "The Proper Practice of Nembutsu." Later we will return to discuss the inter-

¹⁷ The *Kan muryōju kyō* or *Amitāyur dbyāna sūtra*. See "Nembutsu in China," pp. 33-34.

relations of its five constituents and its significance for Genshin's overall nembutsu formulation.

Chapter 5, Aids to Nembutsu

Chapter 5 opens with this passage: "A bird cannot be snared with a net of a single mesh. Let us assist contemplation with the ten thousand techniques and achieve the great accomplishment of rebirth." The ten thousand techniques are various practical ways to assist cultivation of the nembutsu methods of nembutsu-contemplation. The chapter is divided into seven sections: (i) The Place and its Preparation; (ii) The Manner of Practice; (iii) Preventing Indolence; (iv) Preventing Evil and Performing Good; (v) Repenting Sinful Karma; (vi) Resisting Evil Spirits; and (vii) Summary of Essentials. Of these, Sections ii and vii will warrant our attention.

The Manner of Practice.—This section of the *Ōjōyōshū* is concerned with two practical aspects of nembutsu cultivation; First, the proper "manner" of nembutsu cultivation, that is, the proper frequency and intensity, and secondly, the proper attitude or faith for practice.

The manner of cultivation is expressed by the so-called *four modes of practice*.¹⁸ The first of these is lifelong practice. The Pure Land faithful are to cultivate nembutsu "from the first awakening of the thought of bodhi until enlightenment" (who may, of course, constitute many lives). The second mode is reverent practice. While performing nembutsu one is always to face the west and deeply revere the Buddha, Dharma, and sangha of the Pure Land. For ceaseless practice, the third mode, Genshin directs:

Day and night, six times, three times, or twice, be sure to strive and practice according to some regular method. At other times and

¹⁸ In his interpretation of these, and also of the proper attitudes (the "three hearts," see below), Genshin generally follows Shan-tao (613–681), who was probably the greatest of the Chinese Pure Land masters. Genshin drew heavily on Shan-tao's works in the *Ōjōyōshū*, bringing three of the most important of them to the notice of Japanese Buddhists: the *Kambutsu Nembutsu Samadhi Method* (*Kuan-nien fa-men* or *kannen bōmon*), the *Hymns to Rebirth*, and the *Commentary on the Meditation Sutra* (for a discussion of these, see "Nembutsu in China," pp. 42–44). Shan-tao was the most important influence on Hōnen, and, as I hope to show in a later study, it was through the *Ōjōyōshū* that Hōnen discovered Shan-tao. Shan-tao's interpretation of the four modes (and three hearts) is in the introduction to his *Hymns to Rebirth*.

places, using no special acts and regardless of method, never letting it out of your heart and mouth, always *nen* the Buddha.

The last of the four modes is exclusive practice. The Pure Land aspirant is instructed to worship no Buddha other than Amida, and, excepting veneration and praise, to cultivate no practice other than nembutsu. Thus we find that, for Genshin, the proper cultivation of nembutsu requires ceaseless effort and total commitment to the Pure Land and its Buddha.

As the proper attitude or faith for nembutsu practice, Genshin enjoins the *three devotional hearts* (*san shin*) of the *Meditation Sutra*: sincerity, deep faith, and dedication of merit with longing for rebirth. Sincerity means that all one's devotions—veneration, praise, and nembutsu—should be “true” (*shin jitsu*). Deep faith is total conviction of one's own incapacity to save oneself, on the one hand, and total faith in the certainty of salvation through the compassionate vows of Amida and the invocation of his name, on the other hand. The attitude of dedication and longing involves the commitment of all one's stock of merit (good karma), in fervid longing, toward the single goal of Pure Land rebirth. These are the attitudes of the heart which are to accompany ceaseless, lifelong nembutsu.

In spite of the totality of commitment and depth of faith Genshin demands, we should not overlook the fact that for him religious attitude merely assists religious deeds. Karma (i.e., “action”), especially the cultivation of nembutsu in its various forms, is the ultimate determinant of one's spiritual destiny. In this Genshin reveals his Tendai orthodoxy and stands in sharp contrast to later Pure Land teachers who valued faith much more highly.

Summary of Essentials.—This section is one of the most important of the *Ōjō-yōshū*. It summarizes the teachings of Chapters 4 and 5, that is, of the fivefold nembutsu and the aids to nembutsu, presenting and justifying a systematic complex of nembutsu-centered practices and attitudes or a complete cultus for Pure Land worship. The entire section consists of but two short questions and answers:

Question: There has been much taught in the preceding chapters, but we still do not know what practices you consider essential for rebirth.

Answer: They are arousing the thought of bodhi, guarding the three kinds of

conduct, deep faith, sincerity, and constant nembutsu; then in accord with our longing and dedication of merit we will assuredly be reborn in the Land of Utter Bliss. Why should we in addition acquire all the other excellent practices?

Question: Why do you consider these essential for rebirth?

Answer: The significance of arousing the thought of bodhi has already been explained at length. Serious evil in the three kinds of conduct can obstruct the correct path, therefore these must be guarded. Among practices for rebirth, nembutsu is fundamental. The heart of him who practices nembutsu must without fail be as prescribed in the teachings, therefore the three elements deep faith, sincerity, and constancy in nembutsu, are to be acquired. . . . Karma is directed by longing, therefore we are reborn in accord without longing and dedication.

In general, guarding the three kinds of conduct is good karma of prevention. Calling and thinking on the Buddha (*shōnen*) is good karma of production. Arousing the thought of bodhi and longing assist these two kinds of good karma. Therefore these practices are the essentials for rebirth.

From this passage we can single out seven forms of cultivation¹⁹ essential for rebirth:

1. *Arousing the thought of bodhi* is, of course, the third element of the fivefold nembutsu. We have seen how in Buddhist tradition it marks the beginning of the religious life.
2. *Guarding one's conduct* was treated in Section V of this chapter and consists of observing the lay precepts and the monastic rules of conduct. We see that Genshin valued such discipline very highly, pairing it with nembutsu as a source of good karma, and are reminded again of his clerical orthodoxy.
- 3 and 4. *Deep faith and sincerity* are aspects of the faith necessary for proper cultivation of nembutsu, the second and first of the three devotional hearts.
5. *Constancy in endeavor* has been emphasized repeatedly, most recently as the third of the so-called four modes of practice. "As prescribed in the teachings"

¹⁹ This agrees with Hōnen's analysis. He wrote several commentaries on the *Ōjōyōshū*, and we have been increasingly impressed with the astuteness of his interpretations.

probably refers to the *Meditation Sutra* and Genshin's other sources of the four modes and three hearts.

6. *Nembutsu*: "Among practices for rebirth, nembutsu is fundamental." This became the most famous and influential teaching of the *Ōjōyōshū*. It prefaced Hōnen's *Senichaku shū*, as we have seen, and was virtually adopted by the Kamakura period Pure Land movement as its motto. However, while the Kamakura Pure Land teachers interpreted it to mean that nembutsu *only* is necessary for rebirth, we can see that here in its original context it means that nembutsu is the most important, the central practice for rebirth, but must be accompanied by other forms of worship, the six others Genshin has singled out. As to the character of this nembutsu, it seems significant that the aspirant is instructed to call and think on the Buddha with no mention of Buddha-contemplation. We will return to this point presently.

7. *Longing and dedicating* is identical with the fifth element of fivefold nembutsu and the third element of the three devotional hearts.

Thus Genshin here presents a minimal but complete system of Pure Land worship centering on nembutsu. We shall return to this summary when we treat of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s systematization of nembutsu.

Chapter 6, Nembutsu for Special Occasions

In Chapters 4 and 5 Genshin has presented the basic conditions for proper nembutsu cultivation. Chapter 6 outlines methods for practicing nembutsu at two special occasions, at nembutsu sessions and at the time of death. We will recall what the principal activity of Genshin's Nembutsu Society of Twenty-five was a monthly all-night nembutsu session, and moreover, that the members of the society vowed to assist each other especially at the approach of death. The nembutsu instructions in this chapter were probably prepared particularly for the use of the society on these occasions.

Two different *nembutsu session methods* are described. The first, devised by the Chinese master Shan-tao,²⁰ is for a session lasting from one to seven days. It stipulates that for the entire period of the session the practitioner is to stand and sit before an image of Amida Buddha, never reclining or sleeping, and just "continuously and exclusively nening Amida Buddha with heart and mind,

²⁰ In Shan-tao's *Kambutsu Nembutsu Samadhi Method* (see above, n. 18).

. . . nening ten or twenty thousand times while standing, . . . and ten or twenty thousand times while sitting, . . . nening and nening, trying to think of beholding the Buddha.” For the entire period this kind of nembutsu is to be the practitioner’s only activity, except for one simple meal each day. This nembutsu generally conforms to the type of nembutsu Genshin set out as general Buddha-contemplation on the phenomenal Buddha, though here it has become charged with a quality of deep urgency and piety. The practitioner longs not only for the distant event of rebirth into the Pure Land upon death, but also to realize *now* his vision of that Buddha. He longs to become bathed in the effulgent compassion of Amida’s wondrous brilliance, to feel the annulment of his sinful karma, and to taste immediately, if but imperfectly, the salvation awaiting him in the life to come.

The second type of special session nembutsu Genshin presents is the constantly walking samadhi of the *Great Quiescence and Insight*, the authoritative Tendai text on meditation.²¹ In this elaborate rite, the practitioner is for ninety days, day and night, to constantly circumambulate an altar enshrined with an Amida Buddha image, chanting the nembutsu while contemplating Amida Buddha’s Buddha-marks and, hopefully, progressing to a deep meditation on the Buddha as Emptiness-Existence-Middle Truth. This was the orthodox, classic form of nembutsu-related meditation within Genshin’s Tendai tradition. It was also Genshin’s model for much of nembutsu-contemplation, and indeed for much of his understanding of the nature of nembutsu in general.

The second kind of nembutsu for special occasions is that for use at the approach of death, or “*extreme nembutsu*” (*rinjū nembutsu*), an interesting religious phenomenon comparable to extreme unction in the Christian tradition. In all such last rites we see reflected the utterly crucial nature of the moment of death for the destiny of the soul, as the point of transition between the two realms of this life and that beyond.

Genshin first advises that the patient be removed to a quiet chapel or room and situated facing the west, looking on a serene image of Amida Buddha. He then presents two extreme nembutsu methods. The first is again a method of Shan-tao based on his one-to-seven-day nembutsu session method. The dying aspirant is urged: “With heart and mind in consonance, call and call

²¹ Chih-i’s *Mo-ho chih-kuan* (*Maha sbikan*, T. 1911).

without ceasing; dwell on the surety of your rebirth and on the lotus blossom mounted holy assembly coming to guide you.” And his companions in faith are to assist him in his nembutsu devotions, helping him repent of his evil deeds, and praying for his Pure Land salvation.

The second and alternative method of extreme nembutsu is a simple invocational form.²² At the last moment the dying believer is urged to complete ten invocations of the holy name, that is, ten utterances of the sacred formula, *Namu Amida Butsu*. This form of nembutsu, ten-invocation extreme nembutsu, holds an extremely important place within the *Ōjōyōshū*'s scheme of salvation. It takes its source in the Pure Land sutras. The *Larger Pure Land Sutra* (*Larger Sukhāvatī vyūha*, *Dai muryōju kyō*) promises in its eighteenth vow Pure Land rebirth by just ten-nembutsu (or so this vow was interpreted by Chinese and Japanese Pure Land Buddhists). The *Meditation Sutra* (*Kam muryōju kyō*) clearly and dramatically urges particularly the lowest order of sentient beings, the depraved and sinful, to invoke the name of Amida Buddha ten times as certain cause of Pure Land rebirth.²³ There are indications that Genshin, too, intended extreme ten-invocation nembutsu especially for the weak and sinful, for those not “intelligent and diligent.” We will encounter later Genshin's considerable concern with this type of nembutsu and this order of sentient being.

Chapter 7, The Benefits of Nembutsu

Thus far in our survey of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s nembutsu teachings, we have examined detailed instructions on how to perform nembutsu. Chapter 7, “The Benefits of Nembutsu,” tells us *why* we should practice nembutsu. Genshin sets out four major benefits of nembutsu cultivation: 1) the benefit of annulling bad karma and producing good; 2) the benefit of receiving the protection and assistance of Buddhas and other spiritual beings; 3) the benefit of seeing the Buddhas (in contemplation); and 4) the benefit of being reborn into the Pure Land. Each benefit is illustrated and supported by a number of quotations from scripture. We may assume that the first three benefits all contribute to the fourth, the benefit of rebirth.

²² Taken from Tao-ch'ō's *Treatise on the Land of Peace and Bliss*.

²³ See “Nembutsu in China,” pp. 33–34.

Chapter 8, Authorities for Nembutsu

Now we have been presented with the what, how, and why of nembutsu. In Chapters 8 and 9, Genshin takes up the problem of the general relation of nembutsu to other, non-nembutsu practices.

In Genshin's age, Pure Land faith was just beginning to rise in popularity. The dominant form of Buddhism was an esoteric ritualism (Shingon and Tendai Mikkyō), and many other faiths, cults, and superstitions flourished besides. Genshin had opted for the Pure Land way and for nembutsu as the best of all practices—or so he tells us in the *Ōjyōshū*'s Preface—but he evidently felt the need to justify this position to his contemporaries. This he does in Chapter 8, Authorities for Nembutsu. The problem at hand and Genshin's position concerning it are both succinctly stated in the opening question and answer.

Question: All good works, each and every one, has its own merit. Each and every one should earn rebirth. Why do you urge only the single practice of nembutsu?

Answer: That we now urge nembutsu does not hinder observance of the other various excellent practices. It is just that anyone, man or woman, noble or commoner, whether walking, standing, sitting or lying, and regardless of time, place, or any other circumstance, can practice it without difficulty; moreover, it can be utilized even for seeking rebirth at the approach of death. Therefore is nembutsu unsurpassed.

This passage clearly reveals the reasons for Genshin's commitment to nembutsu: first, because it is easy practice, available to everyone, "man or woman, noble or commoner"; second, because it is convenient, it can be performed "regardless of time, place, or any other circumstances"; and third, because it can be practiced even "at the approach of death." These reasons re-emphasize Genshin's commitment to an easy, universally available practice, and, incidentally, also suggest that the nembutsu to which he here commits himself is invocational nembutsu. In the body of this chapter, Genshin quotes ten scriptural passages as authorities for the superiority of nembutsu.

Chapter 9, Sundry Practices for Rebirth

In Chapter 8 Genshin offered reasons and authorities for the superiority of

nembutsu. In Chapter 9 he discusses the practices which are beneficial when cultivated in addition to nembutsu.

We present this chapter on sundry practices for rebirth because those who seek the Land of Utter Bliss need not necessarily practice nembutsu exclusively. Thus, we must present the other practices and leave each to his own choice.

Thirteen forms of religious endeavor, the six *pāramitās* ("perfections") and seven others, are selected as especially beneficial: 1) charity, 2) observance of the precepts, 3) perseverance, 4) endeavor, 5) meditation, 6) wisdom, 7) arousing the thought of bodhi, 8) the six reflections (*roku nen*), 9) reciting scriptures, 10) defending the Buddhist faith, 11) filial piety and clerical obedience, 12) avoidance of pride, and 13) avoidance of ambition. We should observe that Genshin's position accepting a broad array of practices was natural to his age. It was common then for one and the same person to observe simultaneously several of the age's many faiths, cults, and superstitions with little or no feeling of contradiction. Had Genshin given himself up solely to Pure Land faith—and his other writings show that he did not—it would have been unusual; had he insisted here in the *Ōjōyōshū* on the one and only act of nembutsu, it would have been completely unacceptable to his age. It was to be another two centuries before the teaching of exclusive nembutsu came to be accepted. Its teacher was Hōnen.

Chapter 10, Discussion of Problems

Traditionally, Chapter 10 seems to have been neither correctly understood nor justly evaluated. It is generally treated as a non-essential appendage where various problems left over from the main body of the *Ōjōyōshū* are treated.²⁴ Such an interpretation obscures the paramount importance of this chapter. Chapter 10 indeed treats of various problems, but these almost all center on what was probably the crucial problem for Pure Land faith in Genshin's day, the problem of rebirth for the ordinary man²⁵—can he gain

²⁴ For instance, in Tendai and Pure Land sectarian commentaries on the *Ōjōyōshū*.

²⁵ Genshin employs several terms to indicate this sort of person. The term he most often uses is *bombu* (Skt., *pr̥thagjana*—a man of the lower classes, common people)—de-*

rebirth into Amida's Pure Land and, if so, how? Almost every section of Chapter 10 is related to this problem either directly or indirectly. Here are the titles of the ten sections and the most important problem treated in each:

- i. The Buddha and Realm of the Land of Utter Bliss (the ontological status of Amida and his land);
- ii. The Grades of Rebirth (the possibility of rebirth for ordinary beings);
- iii. The Quantity of Those Reborn (the difficulty or ease of rebirth);
- iv. The Nature of Nembutsu (types of nembutsu);
- v. The Nature of Extreme Nembutsu (the character and efficacy of ten-invocation extreme nembutsu);
- vi. Fine Rewards for Coarse Hearts (the merits of nembutsu for the evil and faithless);
- vii. The Superior and Inferior Among Practices (the worth of nembutsu versus that of all other practices);
- viii. The Causes and Conditions of Faith and Faltering (the minimum conditions of faith necessary for rebirth);
- ix. Material Aids to Practice (the necessity of the precepts for ordinary beings);

*cluded sentient being, but he also uses *akunin*—evil person, *zainin*—sinner, *shigaku*—beginner, and other terms. In general, he seems to have had in mind the average human being, that is, within the Buddhist purview, deluded, passion filled, sinful, suffering sentient beings, in contradistinction to Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other spiritually advanced or gifted beings. It is tempting to see in Genshin's concern for "*bombu*" a concern particularly for the common folk, but this was not the case. Buddhism in general has had very little social consciousness, that is to say, awareness that economic or educational disadvantage can be a hinderance to the spiritual life (except insofar as Buddhists have recognized the benefits of monastic life). Men of whatever social class have almost always been lumped together as "deluded sentient beings." Pure Land Buddhists have been somewhat exceptional in this respect. While rarely drawing a clear social distinction, they have advocated simple practices and a mediated salvation which have naturally appealed most strongly to disadvantaged classes, and in practice, Pure Land teachers have often actively evangelized among common folk. In Genshin's case, his occasional references to "nobles or commoners" show that he was at least aware of social distinctions and that he at least included the salvation of common folk within the extent of his concern. It is not until Hōnen that we find a fully developed social awareness and a teaching addressed specifically to the lower classes.

- x. Human and Scriptural Aids to Practice (the texts most useful for nembutsu cultivation).

Sections i, ii, iii, and v treat systematically the problem of rebirth for ordinary beings; we will examine them shortly. Sections iv, vi, viii, and ix are concerned with this same problem partially or indirectly, leaving only sections vii and x unrelated to it.

Rebirth for the ordinary man.—In Section i Genshin takes up the issue of the ontological status of Amida and his Pure Land, or more exactly, of the suitability of the land to lowly ordinary beings. The objection is raised that if Amida's land is indeed a "pure land," a spiritually perfect, totally enlightened realm, then how can ordinary, deluded, imperfect, "defiled" beings become a part of this land through rebirth into it? Theoretically, it is objected, only bodhisattvas or similarly advanced beings should be eligible for such a rebirth. And conversely, if ordinary beings are able to be reborn into Amida's land, then it cannot be a genuine pure land with all of the soteriological benefits such a land provides.²⁶

Setting aside the niceties of these doctrinal objections, Genshin asserts that lands are neither pure nor impure in themselves, but only in the minds of sentient beings, or in other words, that the spiritual quality of a realm corresponds to the spiritual understanding of those reborn there. "We should just call and think on the Buddha," he concludes, "and not make such worrystome discriminations." Consistent with the spirit of the highest Mahayana metaphysics, Genshin in effect dismisses the problem as one of false distinctions.

In Section ii the concern shifts from the status of the land to the quality of the beings reborn there. The crucial question posed is how—even if the land is not intrinsically a perfect realm (a "recompense-land")—beings with heavy karmic burdens can be reborn there. Genshin replies with a quotation from a standard Tendai scripture:²⁷

Master T'ien-t'ai states, "Although the land of the Buddha of Eternal Life has superior benefits, if at the time of death a being with

²⁶ We have simplified this argument somewhat. Also at issue is the status of Amida's land as an apparition-land or a land of recompense (see above, n. 13).

²⁷ Chih-i's commentary to the *Vimalakīrti nirdeśa sūtra*.

heavy karma repents and performs nembutsu, his karmic obstacles will topple and he will gain rebirth. . . .”

We should note that the type of nembutsu by which those with heavy burdens gain rebirth is extreme nembutsu.

In Section iii Genshin elaborates his argument for the rebirth of ordinary beings by showing that such an event is not to be considered rare or unlikely. He points out that in the *Larger Pure Land Sutra* the Buddha Shakyamuni predicts that countless beings who possess even a slight stock of merit—that is, countless ordinary beings—will eventually be reborn in Amida’s Pure Land. Genshin urges that we be diligent and waste not this opportunity for unmerited salvation.

Finally, at Section v, “The Nature of Extreme Nembutsu,” the qualities of the extreme nembutsu by which evil and ordinary beings can win rebirth is examined. First it becomes apparent that by extreme nembutsu here Genshin means ten invocation extreme nembutsu—ten utterances of the sacred name at the moment of death—the practice that is urged in the *Meditation Sutra* for the salvation of the very worst of sinners. The great power of this kind of nembutsu, the reasons for its power, and the limitations of this power are each set out.

As to the power or effectiveness of extreme nembutsu, we learn that its few intense instants have more power than even a hundred years of other practice, and in fact, under certain conditions (when the “heart is strong”), had the power to annul an infinite amount of sinful karma. In an interesting comparison we are told that perfected contemplative nembutsu has this power also, but that vocal nembutsu at ordinary times does not.

Turning to the reasons for this power, we find that it depends on the cultivator’s “depth of heart” (*kokoro no senjin*) and on the merit of the Buddha’s name. By depth of heart, Genshin probably means the urgent longing, as death approaches, for Pure Land salvation, and probably also the depth of faith and mere degree of diligence and exertion. The karmic merit of the Buddha’s name is the intrinsic power for annulling bad karma and effecting rebirth which is believed to have been instilled in the name by the great vows and works of Amida Buddha during his long bodhisattva career. Because of this merit the mere hearing or reciting of the name has a karmic power for an-

nuling bad karma and effecting rebirth which is largely independent of the hearer or reciter. Here we can discern the incantational dimension of invocational nembutsu. We should note, however, that in Genshin's case at least, such nembutsu is not simply magical. It is the central action-symbol of a religious life that seeks—if we recall the four bodhisattva vows— a universal spiritual transformation.

At one point, we are given a summary of the total conditions contributing to rebirth of evil beings by extreme nembutsu as 1) arousing the thought of bodhi, 2) Amida's vows, 3) longing for rebirth, 4) the merit of nembutsu (which resides in the name), and 5) the hidden assistance of the Buddhas. But in the last analysis we are told that the reasons for the power of extreme nembutsu are beyond the understanding of unenlightened beings.

Finally, we should examine Genshin's position on the limits of the power of extreme nembutsu. This was an issue hotly debated on the continent, particularly because the *Larger Pure Land Sutra* and the *Meditation Sutra* seem to disagree on the subject. Genshin ventures this opinion: That in general ordinary beings, even dull or evil beings, are assured of salvation by ten invocation extreme nembutsu; that those exceptionally evil beings who have committed the five irreversible evils²⁸ can be saved by extreme nembutsu under certain favorable conditions, though their rebirth is not assured; but that those who have maligned the true Dharma cannot be saved under any circumstances, even by extreme nembutsu.

We hardly need point out that this section clearly shows the extent to which Genshin was concerned with the rebirth of the ordinary man and to what degree he acknowledged the effectiveness of invocational nembutsu. Of course, he tended to think of the salvation of such men and the operation of this nembutsu within the narrow, ritualistic framework of a deathbed observance. Moreover, although he recognized the importance of the vows taken by Amida Buddha to save all beings by nembutsu, he attributed the efficacy of nembutsu largely to the cultivator's accumulation of karmic merit and to annulment of evil karma. This leads us to recall that Genshin was a cleric, a scholar priest in the orthodox Buddhist tradition and establishment. That a concern for the

²⁸ *Gogyaku*—patricide, matricide, killing an arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and destroying the harmony of the sangha.

ordinary man and regard for a simple form of worship should have penetrated to his Yokawa retreat at all should be more surprising than his traditionalism. Also, he was a strict interpreter of his texts. Extreme nembutsu, merit accumulation, and karma annulment are fundamental principles of the *Meditation Sutra*, his dearest guide for Pure Land teachings. Yet, we have seen how Genshin drew out the full implications of this and other Pure Land scriptures and argued, even passionately in his way, for the possibility of salvation for the ordinary man, indeed, for all but the most depraved of mortals, by simple invocation of the sacred name. Not until Hōnen was this position significantly enlarged upon.

Finally, before taking leave of Chapter 10, we should take note of the classification of nembutsu types presented at Section iv, "The Nature of Nembutsu." Nembutsu is classified into four categories: 1) meditative nembutsu, 2) nonmeditative nembutsu, 3) objective nembutsu, and 4) objectless nembutsu. The effectiveness of the four types and their appropriateness for various kinds of practitioners is also set out for us. This typology is extremely important for understanding the systematic dimension of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s teachings and we will return to it below.

The Systematization of Nembutsu

We have attempted to set out the basic teachings of the *Ōjōyōshū*. However, the importance of the *Ōjōyōshū*—its effect on the faith of its own and later ages—lies not only in its practical advice and instruction, but also in its less apparent organizing and structuring of nembutsu practice and theory. Before Genshin's time there had been a good deal of systematic thought in China on theoretic Pure Land problems—such as on the ontological status of pure lands and the bodhisattva degrees of the *Meditation Sutra*'s nine grades of beings—and several practical methods of nembutsu cultivation had been formulated—like the constantly walking samadhi of Chih-i's *Great Quiescence and Insight*—but there had been no systematic and thorough treatment of nembutsu as such. In Japan there had been relatively little Pure Land thought of any kind. Expressions of Pure Land faith, such as aspiration for rebirth and nembutsu practice, were merely included within the Tendai eclectic system with little apparent attempt at genuine reconciliation. Yet, as reflected for instance in the activities of the Nembutsu Society of Twenty-Five, there was a demand

for something more. Genshin's task then was to systematize continental thought so as to satisfy demands for a simplified, practical, more devotional and more genuinely Pure Land type of nembutsu, while accommodating this to the fundamentally anti-Pure Land, orthodox Tendai position. Here we will attempt to see to what extent he accomplished this task.

The *Ōjōyōshū* began its discussion of nembutsu at Chapter 4, "The Proper Practice of Nembutsu." As correct and complete nembutsu, Genshin set out the fivefold nembutsu—nembutsu-veneration, nembutsu-practice, nembutsu-aspiration, nembutsu-contemplation, and nembutsu-dedication. This is intended to be a complete and unitary cultus. The five nembutsu elements are considered to include the three categories of karmic causation—physical karma functioning within nembutsu-veneration, oral karma within nembutsu-praise, and mental karma within nembutsu-aspiration, -contemplation, and -dedication—and thus to mutually reinforce and complement one another. Nembutsu-contemplation, clearly the central and most important of the five, is framed by nembutsu-aspiration and nembutsu-dedication in functional roles. Nembutsu-aspiration is a prerequisite to the proper practice of nembutsu. It functions as dedication to purpose—self-dedication to nembutsu cultivation for the purpose of bringing all beings to Pure Land salvation. And nembutsu-dedication is the sequel to nembutsu cultivation—commitment of all the merit accruing from nembutsu-practice to the single goal of Pure Land rebirth for oneself and others.

As alternative methods of nembutsu-contemplation, Genshin described three different types of nembutsu: 1) Buddha-mark-contemplation, which is meditatively envisualizing Amida's various Buddha-marks: 2) general Buddha-contemplation, the envisualizing of Amida's general appearance, culminating in a deep meditation on the Buddha as Emptiness-Existence-Middle Truth; and 3) simplified Buddha-contemplation, a series of three successively simpler Buddha-contemplations followed by the prescription of invocational nembutsu for those incapable of contemplative nembutsu. Thus, as proper nembutsu, Genshin has in effect set out four alternative methods of nembutsu cultivation—three of contemplative nembutsu and one of invocational nembutsu.

In the fivefold nembutsu of the Vasubandhu *Pure Land Shastra* invocational nembutsu is enjoined as part of nembutsu-praise. The *Ōjōyōshū*, of course, enjoins it as an alternative method of nembutsu-contemplation. This slight shift

in location reflects a cardinal feature of the *Ōjōyōshū*'s system of nembutsu. In the *Pure Land Shastrā* invocational nembutsu and contemplative nembutsu are both *indispensable* within the unitary framework of the fivefold nembutsu. However, here in the *Ōjōyōshū*, contemplative and invocational nembutsu are presented as *alternative* forms. Those incapable of contemplation may omit it entirely, substitute invocation of the sacred name, and still completely satisfy all the requirements of complete, proper, orthodox nembutsu cultivation. This is a genuine Pure Land position: Types of nembutsu are distinguished according to the capacity of different practitioners, and a genuinely easy practice is granted to the less capable.

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that within the framework of the fivefold nembutsu, and of nembutsu-contemplation also, contemplative nembutsu and not invocational nembutsu is clearly more highly valued and of prior importance. Genshin was after all a member of a monastic order founded on meditative insight and discipline, and Buddha-contemplation was obviously the most genuine and efficacious form of nembutsu for him. We may be sure that he would have expected every aspirant to strive sincerely and thoroughly at contemplative nembutsu before becoming eligible for recourse to invocational nembutsu. Invocation of the sacred name is only the last resort for the most destitute of beings. As we have pointed out, however, in just such a mode and object of salvation lies the very *raison d'être* of the Pure Land movement as well as the guiding principle of the *Ōjōyōshū*.

In Chapter 5, we found instruction on the manner of nembutsu practice and on the character of the faith that should accompany it. We found that nembutsu is to be cultivated according to four modes: 1) reverently, 2) steadfastly to the end of one's life, 3) ceaselessly, and 4) exclusively. The practitioner is to commit himself totally and constantly to the cultivation of nembutsu. Faith was looked on as the devotional attitude necessary for proper nembutsu practice, and as such the three devotional hearts of the *Meditation Sutra* were enjoined: 1) sincerity in veneration, praise, and nembutsu; 2) deep conviction of one's own incapacity, and deep faith in Amida's salvation; and 3) longing for rebirth and dedication of all one's merit to that goal.

At the end of Chapter 5 we found the important summation called "Summary of Essentials." Here Genshin summarized Chapters 4 and 5, asserting that it must be assisted by other acts. These were arousing the thought of bodhi,

observing the precepts, deep and sincere faith, constant endeavor, and longing for rebirth with dedication of one's merit to that goal. This was presented as a minimal but sufficient system of nembutsu worship.

It becomes apparent that we now have been presented with two significantly different, purportedly complete and sufficient systems of nembutsu cultivation, that of the fivefold nembutsu and that presented in the "Summary of Essentials." What, if any, is the relation of these two systems? First we should notice that both systems center on the nembutsu of nembutsu-contemplation. Examining the place of nembutsu in the system of the Summary, we find that it is framed by arousing the thought of bodhi and dedication of merit just as in the fivefold nembutsu. In place of veneration and praise, however, there have been substituted precept observance, deep faith, sincerity, and the necessity of constant endeavor in nembutsu. These substitutions seem to give the Summary's system a less ritualistic and more devotional quality. As the nembutsu of the new system originates in the nembutsu-contemplation of the fivefold system, we may assume that it is essentially the same kind of nembutsu, with contemplation and invocation available in a parallel fashion according to the capacity of the practitioner. Yet we have seen that Genshin uses the expression "calling and thinking on the Buddha" in discussing the function of nembutsu in the Summary, while contemplative nembutsu is nowhere mentioned. Moreover, we should note that the fivefold nembutsu has traditionally been considered a discipline for bodhisattvas and advanced beings and that even in the *Ōjōyōshū* it remains a very demanding regimen. By definition, the system of the Summary is a minimal cultus. We cannot say for certain that Genshin intended it for the ordinary man, but it is clearly not designed for bodhisattvas and advanced beings. Considering all these factors, we are probably justified in concluding that the fivefold nembutsu has been modified into the system of the Summary, becoming an easier, more devotional, more thoroughly Pure Land type of cultus.

One further point to notice here is the relation, within the fivefold nembutsu, and between it and the new cultus of the Summary, of orthodox Tendai and Pure Land forms of cultivation. The fivefold nembutsu, though directed toward achieving Pure Land rebirth, is a type of cultus acceptable to Tendai traditions. It is rigorous, thorough, and contemplation centered, even incorporating the traditional Tendai meditation on Emptiness-Existence-Middle

Truth. Yet as we have pointed out, the inclusion of invocational nembutsu into this cultus as an alternative to contemplation gives to it a genuine Pure Land character. Thus, according to which of the two forms of nembutsu is utilized, the fivefold cultus can be either a rigorous, contemplative exercise congenial to the clerical Tendai temperament, or an easier form of worship suitable to Pure Land faith. We suggest that this synthesis of Tendai and Pure Land forms functions to bring about a measure of accommodation between these two potentially hostile traditions.

Moreover the relation of the fivefold nembutsu to the cultus of the "Summary of Essentials" would seem to accomplish the same sort of accommodation. The one is a classical model conforming generally to Tendai standards, the other is a considerably simplified, more devotional, and potentially more popular method. Yet they are not so much opposed as complementary. The new, more practical, easier system has retained the core of the old traditional system, while the old system still remains as the classical ideal of perfect nembutsu endeavor. Perhaps in these ways the tasks we saw as the *Ōjōyōshū*'s, those of developing more devotional Pure Land forms and accommodating these to the orthodox Tendai position, have in some measure been accomplished.

Chapter 6, "Nembutsu for Special Occasions," presented us with methods of nembutsu for nembutsu sessions and for the time of death. Two nembutsu session methods were offered, a one-to-seven-day method devised by Shan-tao, and the ninety day constantly walking samadhi. And two methods of extreme nembutsu were set out, a contemplative method and a simpler method urging just ten invocations of Amida's sacred name. The types of nembutsu employed in these methods are neither new nor significantly different from those presented in Chapter 4. The most important contribution of this chapter to the systematization of nembutsu practice and theory is simply the clear distinction it makes between nembutsu for special occasions and normal everyday nembutsu. Never before in either China or Japan had this distinction been so clearly made and the basic types of special occasion nembutsu set out in alternative forms.

At Chapter 7, "The Benefits of Nembutsu," we were presented with the answer to the question, why practice nembutsu. Four benefits of nembutsu are given, beginning with the benefit of annulment of bad karma and culminating in the blessing of rebirth into the Pure Land.

Chapters 8 and 9 instructed us on the relation of nembutsu to other practices. In Chapter 8 we were taught that nembutsu is the best practice for rebirth because it is easy and convenient. And in Chapter 9 there were summarized thirteen non-nembutsu practices which Genshin considered especially effective when practiced in addition to nembutsu. In summarizing the *Ōjō-yōshū*'s formulation of the relation of other practices to nembutsu, we may say that for rebirth (1) nembutsu is the fundamental, indispensable practice, (2) that a few other specified practices—those of the Summary of Essentials—are necessary as auxiliaries to nembutsu, and (3) that all other practices are not necessary, though certain of them are effective when cultivated in addition to nembutsu.

Finally, we should point out that important as their teachings are, the greatest significance of these two chapters for nembutsu systematization lies simply in the clear-cut distinction which they establish between nembutsu and other practices. This distinction had been made before, but never with such conciseness as here. It was to prove particularly important to later thinkers.

These chapters have apparently treated all the important aspects of nembutsu, leaving only secondary problems to be treated in Chapter 10, "Discussion of Problems." However, as we have discovered, the greater part of this chapter centers on one very important problem, that of the possibility of rebirth for ordinary beings and the nembutsu appropriate to them. The possibility of the rebirth of ordinary beings in a pure land is established, ten-involution extreme nembutsu is assigned as the major vehicle for such rebirth, and the efficacy and limitations of this nembutsu are defined. These teachings clearly enunciate and greatly expand the position first suggested by the assignment of invocational nembutsu to those incapable of contemplation in Chapter 4. They broaden and enrich the nembutsu teachings of the entire *Ōjō-yōshū* by emphatically embracing within the range of its salvation the lowest, most evil of men. This thorough Pure Land position had been taken before in China, of course. It was Genshin's achievement to have introduced it and justified it to Japan.

Finally, we must examine the nembutsu typology of Chapter 10, Section iv, the most important theoretical formulation of the *Ōjō-yōshū*. We will recall that nembutsu was divided into four major types:

1. Meditative nembutsu (*jōgō*): contemplating the Buddha in sitting meditation;
2. Non-meditative nembutsu (*sangō*): at all times and places, whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying, practicing nembutsu without concentration;
3. Objective nembutsu (*usō gō*): contemplating the marks, "nening" the name of the Buddha, and longing for rebirth;
4. Objectless nembutsu (*musō gō*): invoking the Buddha and longing for rebirth while contemplating that both the land longed for and the Buddha invoked are Empty, yet Existent, yet neither Empty nor Existent, and thus realizing the Ultimate Truth.

The effectiveness of the four types and their appropriateness for kinds of practitioners were also set out. All four types are capable of effecting rebirth, and it is possible to envision a Buddha by all types except non-meditative nembutsu. Objective nembutsu is for beginners, and objectless nembutsu for experienced practitioners. Non-meditative nembutsu can be cultivated "by all sentient beings, either walking or sitting, at all times and places, . . . without hindering other duties, and even at the approach of death." And meditative nembutsu is for advanced beings and bodhisattvas.²⁹

Examined closely, it becomes apparent that non-meditative nembutsu is probably invocational nembutsu. The phrase "calling and thinking" is not used, but the general description of non-meditative nembutsu, especially that it is to be practiced "whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying," and moreover, its universal suitability and availability, all suggest that it is primarily invocational nembutsu. Objective nembutsu is clearly Buddha contemplation, and objectless nembutsu is abstract meditation like that of the

²⁹ Actually, the text says that meditative nembutsu is appropriate "from *bombu* through the ten stages." The ten stages are the last ten of the fifty-two degrees of bodhisattva attainment. Our interpretation centers on the term *bombu*. This term usually means deluded sentient beings (see above, n. 25), but here it seems to be used in a technical sense to refer to the first forty of the fifty-two Bodhisattva degrees. In doctrinal jargon, beings of the first ten of the fifty-two degrees were called outer *bombu* (*gebon*), and those of degrees eleven to forty, inner *bombu* (*naibon*). Thus, "from *bombu* through the ten stages" seems to be a way of indicating all the various degrees of bodhisattvahood. The passage as a whole also supports this interpretation.

constantly walking samadhi. Looking still closer, we realize that we really have here two sub-classifications which are not mutually exclusive, and that meditative nembutsu can include objective and objectless nembutsu, both of which normally require a sitting posture and concentrated attention. Thus we are left with only two basic types of nembutsu, meditative and non-meditative. The former is contemplative, and the latter is at least primarily invocational; the former is suitable for advanced beings, and the latter for everyone, including, most significantly, the ordinary man.

Now the question arises, what is the relation of this typology to the nembutsu teachings we have found elsewhere in the *Ōjōyōshū*? Buddha-mark and general Buddha-contemplation, and seven-day and ninety-day special session nembutsu, for example, are all contemplative, and thus can be designated as meditative nembutsu. The invocational nembutsu for those unable to contemplate and ten-invocation extreme nembutsu are both nonmeditative nembutsu. As we have seen, the nembutsu of the "Summary of Essentials" probably includes both meditative and invocational types, although it emphasizes the latter. May we extrapolate further and assign all these forms of meditative nembutsu to advanced beings and the non-meditative forms to ordinary beings? Ten-invocation extreme nembutsu, for instance, is clearly intended for the ordinary man, whereas the constantly walking samadhi is just as clearly beyond him. We should avoid carrying this theorization too far, but it is clear that Genshin conceived of nembutsu within well-defined categories appropriate to types of cultivators, and that an examination of the *Ōjōyōshū* in the light of this typology helps us to understand the unity and order which underlie its various and complex nembutsu formulations.

Conclusions

We have now re-examined the entire *Ōjōyōshū* and have seen how it accomplishes a thorough systematization of nembutsu for both practice and theory. It describes basic methods of nembutsu, both contemplative and invocational. It sets out the proper manner of nembutsu cultivation and the faith necessary for it. It distinguishes nembutsu for special occasions from ordinary nembutsu, and presents special methods for nembutsu sessions and extreme nembutsu. It offers the Pure Land aspirant two complete systems of nembutsu-centered worship—one classical and complete, the other easier and

more devotional. The *Ōjōyōshū* clarifies the relation of nembutsu to other practices, firmly establishing nembutsu as fundamental and indispensable, though not self-sufficient. Moreover, it affirms nembutsu as a method of salvation suitable for even the lowest of beings. And finally, it presents a theory of nembutsu which classifies types of nembutsu, outlines their potentials, and defines their appropriateness to kinds of practicers. In short, we have found the *Ōjōyōshū* to be a complete practical manual, a comprehensive doctrinal synthesis, and an inspiring call to faith and practice. These are the qualities which enabled it both to fulfill a deep religious need of its own age and to provide a transition to the religious life of the succeeding age.

CHINESE-JAPANESE CHARACTER
LIST

akunin 惡人
Amida 阿弥陀
An-lo chi 安樂集
Anraku shū 安樂集
ashura 阿修羅
bessō kan 別相觀
bombu 凡夫
byakugō-sō 白毫相
Chih-i 智顗
Dai muryōju kyō 大無量壽經
Daishū kyō 大集經
ekō mon 廻向門
Eshin Sōzu 惠心僧都
Eshin Sōzu zenshū 惠心僧都全集
gaki 餓鬼
gebon 外凡
Genshin 源信
gogyaku 五逆
Gon Shōsōzu 權小僧都
Hōnen 法然
Hossō 法相
hotsu bodai shin 發菩提心
Hui-yüan 慧遠
i 意
innen 因緣
jō 丈
jōgō 定業
ji 事
jikan 事觀
kan 觀
Kanjin ryaku yōshū 觀心略要集
kannen 觀念
kanzatsu mon 觀察門
Kam muryōju kyō 觀無量壽經
kokoro no senjin 心の淺深
kudoku 功德
Kū-Ke-Chū 空坂中
Maka shikan 摩訶止觀

Mo-bo chib-kuan 摩訶止觀
musō gō 無相業
naibon 內凡
namu 南無
nembutsu 念仏
nen 念
Nijūgo Zammai E 二十五三昧会
Ojō ron chū 往生論註
Ojōyōshū 往生要集
omou 想う
raihai mon 礼拝門
rikan 理觀
rinjū nembutsu 臨終念仏
roku nen 六念
Ryōgen 良源
sagan mon 作願門
sandan mon 讚歎門
sangō 散業
san shin 三心
Senchaku bongan nembutsu shū 選擇本願
念仏集
shaku 尺
Shan-tao 善導
shigaku 始學
shin jitsu 真実
shō 称
shōnen 称念
sō 想
Sō kan gyō 双卷經
sōsō kan 總相觀
tai 体
T'an-luan 曇鸞
Tao-ch'ō 道綽
Tendai 天台
T'ien-t'ai 天台
toku 德
usō gō 有相業
Wang-sheng lun chu 往生論註
zainin 罪人
zōryaku kan 雜略觀