

THE PURELAND DOCUMENT OF THE
TRUTHFUL DOCTRINE, WORK, AND
ATTAINMENT. INTRODUCTION.

顯淨土真實教行證文類序

竊以。難思弘誓，度難度海大船。無礙光明，破無明闇慧日。^①

In my own mind, it was thus thought.^② The Grand Vow^③ which it is hard to conceive,^④ is the great ship sailing across the ocean which it is difficult to sail across.^⑤ The Illuminating Light^⑥ knowing no obstruction^⑦ is the sun of wisdom^⑧ destroying the reign of darkness held by Ignorance.^⑨

① In this section, there is a statement of the fundamental truth of Shin Buddhism—the Original Vow of Amitābha Buddha and His Light with their powerfulness. The statement is based upon the teachings of the Wu-liang-shou-ching 無量壽經.

② The sentence placed in the very beginning of this general introduction makes us feel that there is a betrayal of the writer's inner mind subtly working, together with an aspect of the attitude he takes towards the composition of this book. It seems that the writer first quietly listens to those teachings of Buddha the Great Holy and of patriarchs and masters the spiritual fore-runners, and then deliberately digest them in the innermost of his mind. The composition of the book is not for declaration nor is it for proclamation. As to the writer's usage of words, the commentators notices, he is always prudent enough to employ those words which were used by his Pure Land predecessors and consequently connoted with rich associations. Those two Chinese words 竊以, with which the writer begins this book, were formerly used by Shan-tao (612-681), one of the seven patriarchs of Shin Buddhism, in the opening chapter of his Commentary to the Meditation Sūtra. Cf. Shan-tao, Kuan-ching Hsüan-i-fen, 善導, 觀經玄義分: 竊以。真如廣大, 五乘不測其邊。法性深高, 十聖莫窮其際。These words are also used in the "retrospect" of the present work, just in the same way they were used by Shan-tao in the concluding remark of that Commentary. Cf. Kuan-ching San-shan-i, 觀經 散善義: 竊以。真宗叵遇, 淨土之要難逢。The retrospect of the present work, 化身土卷後序, 竊以。聖道諸教行證久廢。淨土真宗證道今盛。

③ The Grand Vow 弘誓 refers to the Original Vow of Amitābha Buddha. The word is the equivalent to 'praṇidhāna' in Sanskrit. Praṇidhāna, meaning 'wish', 'will', or 'vow', is generally translated in Chinese as 願. It is a conception peculiar to Mahāyāna Buddhism. A Bodhisattva as a rule makes a number of vows before he begins his career, for his desire to attain the final stage of Buddhahood is not only for his own benefit but for all the worlds visible and invisible. Now, the Bodhisattva's vows are two kinds: the general vow and the special vow. The former is common to all the Bodhisattvas, while the latter belongs to each individual Bodhisattva. The general vow of the Bodhisattva is known as Four Grand Vows 四弘誓願. They are: (1) However innumerable beings are, I vow to save them; (2) however inexhaustible the passions

are, I vow to extinguish them; (2) however innumerable the Dharmas are, I vow to master them; (4) however incomparable the Buddha-truth is, I vow to attain it. The special vow of the Bodhisattva differs according to each individual Bodhisattva. For example, there are forth-eight vows of Dharmākara, who became Amitābha Buddha, when his Vows were all fulfilled. The vow, when it is one which a Buddha or a Bodhisattva made in the past, is called 'pūrva-praṇidhāna'. Pūrva-praṇidhāna, meaning 'original wish or vow', 'wish or vow in the disciplinary stage', 'wish or vow from of old or in previous life', is translated in Chinese as 本願, 因願, 宿願, 本誓, 或 本弘誓願. Now, 願 or 本願 in general is sometimes called 弘願 or 弘誓 in its greatness. 悲願 as it comes out of the Buddha's compassionate heart. Here in the text 弘誓 refers to the forty-eight 本願 of Amitābha Buddha, which is set forward in the Wu-liang-shou-ching. As to these forty-eight Vows of Amitābha Buddha, see D. T. Suzuki's translation of them in his essay on "The Shin Sect of Buddhism", Eastern Buddhist, Vol VII, nos 3-4. pp. 227-245. The usage of the word 弘誓 is found in the 無量壽經: 發斯弘誓, 建此願已。

④ 'Hard to conceive' 難思 is here used as the abbreviation of 難思議 'hard to conceive and hard to express'. Thus, the idea is allied to that of 不可思議 'impossible to conceive and impossible to express'. Both 難思議 and 不可思議 are epithets applied especially to Amida's Vow and His Light. Amida's Vow and His Light are both inconceivable, because they are beyond our mentation in their mysterious power or activities, working out the salvation of those who are too wicked to be saved. Cf. 信卷末: 奇哉, 佛力難思古今未有。樂邦文類三: 願力難思。

⑤ The ocean which it is difficult to sail across 難度海 (duḥśamatikramasāgara). This is the ocean of the birth-and-death where we are adrift from time immemorial and could never get out of it so as to attain the other shore of enlightenment. In other words, it refers to three worlds and six states of existence, where we are transmigrating from the beginningless past. The three worlds are: (1) the world of desire; (2) the world of form; and, (3) the world of no-form. The six states of existence are: (1) the hell; (2) the abode of hungry ghost; (3) the animal world; (4) the asura world; (5) the human world; and, (6) the dēva world. Cf. Nāgārjuna, Shi-chu-p'i-p'o-sha-lun. (Daśabhūmi-vibhāṣā-śāstra), I-hsing-p'in 龍樹十住毘婆娑論, 易行品第九: 乘彼八道船, 能度難度海, 自度亦度彼, 我禮自在者。ibid, hsü-p'in 同書, 序品第一: 地獄畜生餓鬼人天阿修羅六趣險難恐怖大畏是衆生生死大海旋流洄洑 (乃至) 隨愛凡夫無始以來常行其中如是往來生死大海未曾有得到於彼岸。

⑥ The Illuminating Light 光明 (prabhāva). It is the light emanating from a Buddha's or a Bodhisattva's body (身光, 色光, 外光) or mind i. e. wisdom (心光, 知慧光, 內光). 光明, along with 本願, manifests the saving power of Amitābha Buddha. Whereas the 本願 is the will-power awakened in His disciplinary stage, at the moment when He began His career of a Bodhisattva, the 光明 is the mysterious power attained after His enlightenment. According to the Wu-liang-shou-ching, Amitābha Buddha is equipped with twelve kinds of 光明. They are: (1) the light of no-measure; (2), of no-bounds; (4), of no-equal; (5), of up-flaming; (6), of purity, or, of no lust; (7), of joy, or, of no-resentment; (8), of wisdom, or, of no-folly; (9), of no-intermitting; (10), hard to conceive; (11), of no expressing; and, (12), of transcending the light of the sun and of the moon. Among them, however, the 無礙光 (3) and the 不可思議光 (10th and 11th combined) are the most important. 南無阿彌陀佛, 南無不可思議光如來, and 歸命盡十方無礙光如來 are the three appellations used by Shin Buddhist when they want to designate Amitābha Buddha as the object of worship. There are three kinds of functions of light. They are: (1) maturing all sentient beings (2) destroying darkness of ignorance;

and, (3) taking in and not forsaking all those who practices the work of Nembutsu. Cf. 無量壽經上：其有衆生遇此光者，三垢消滅，身意柔輭，歡喜踊躍，善心生焉。若在三途勤苦之處，見此光明，皆得休息，無復苦惱，壽終之後皆蒙解脫。觀無量壽經：一一光明徧照十方世界，念佛衆生攝取不捨。

⑦ Knowing no obstructions 無礙 (apratihata). There are two kinds of 無礙. One is technically known as 圓融無礙. The world, when viewed as it is, is a world of non-discrimination where things interpenetrate. There will be no hindrance whatever in it. This is called 圓融無礙. Cf. Tan-luan, Ching-t'u-lun-chu, 曇鸞, 淨土論註下：道者無礙道也。經言，十方無礙人一道出生死，一道一無礙道也。無礙者謂知生死即是涅槃，如是等入不二法門無礙相也。The other kind of 無礙 is called 自在無礙. It is spoken especially the Light of Amitābha Buddha. We read in the Smaller Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra: 舍利弗，彼佛光明無量，照十方國，無所障礙，是故號爲阿彌陀。(O, Śāriputra, the illuminating light of that Buddha is infinite indeed. It extends its rays over all the countries of ten quarters. There is no obstructing of it. He is therefore called Amitābha.) Shinran Shōnin interprets 無礙 in one of his works: 無礙 means unobstructedness, i. e. not being obstructed by any evil passion or by any evil karma of sentient beings. It is the freedom of activities". 無礙 here in the text refers to the second kind of 無礙. Cf. 曇鸞, 淨土論註下：佛光明是知慧相也。此光明照十方世界無有障礙。能除十方衆生無明黑闇。非如日月珠光但破空穴中闇也。

⑧ The sun of wisdom 慧日. The Buddha's Light is the light of wisdom. Hence, the sun of wisdom. Cf. 無量壽經：慧日照世間，消除生死雲。

⑨ Ignorance 無明 (avidyā). There are various interpretations of avidyā. Generally speaking, however, avidyā is 'not being vidyā', 'not being enlightened', 'not attaining the truth'. The truth of existence is that, all is empty, all goes beyond the categories of being and non-being, inner existences as well as outer existences. 無明 is the attachment, especially the attachment to one's own inner being, whence all evil comes. In Shin Buddhism, two kinds of 無明 is specially mentioned. One is the folly which is one of the three evil passions, and the other is to harbour a doubt about the efficacy of Amitābha Buddha's saving power. This latter is technically known as 不了佛智 'not attaining the Buddha's wisdom'. Cf. Ta-p'i-p'o-sha-lun 大毘婆論廿五：不達不了不解是無明義。Hui-yūan, Ta-ch'eng-i-ching, 慧遠, 大乘義章卷四：言無明者，痴闇之心體，無慧明故，曰無明。

然則。淨邦緣熟，調達闍世與逆害。淨業機彰，釋迦韋提選安養。斯乃。權化仁齊救濟苦惱群萌。世雄悲正欲惠逆謗闡提^⑩。

It is for this reason, that the time^⑩ was shown to have matured for the Pure Land Teaching^⑩ to be set forward, where Ajātasatru was induced by Dēvadatta to commit those grave offences; and the world^⑩ were betrayed to be suited to the Pure Land Work, where Vaidehī was inspired by Śākyamuni to make choice of the Land of Blissfulness.^⑩ This means that those manifested personalities,^⑩ all in one benevolent heart, achieved the welfare of those multifarious beings^⑩ who are keenly feeling various kinds of pains; and, that the Most Powerful One of the World,^⑩ in His great compassionate heart, was verily anxious to bestow^⑩ [the gift of truthfulness] upon those who

committed grave offences,^⑥ upon those who slandered the Right Dharma, and upon those who are Icchantika.

① This section is related to the rise of Pure Land Buddhism. Pure Land Buddhism was caused by the desire of Vaidehī in connexion with the so-called “Tragedy of Rājagṛha”, narrated in the Kuan-wu-liang-shou-ching 觀無量壽經 (Amitāyur-dhyāna Sūtra or the Meditation Sūtra). Prince Ajātaśatru (闍世 in the present text) of Magadha, induced by his friend Dēvadatta (調達 in the present text), usurps the throne, confining his own father Bimbisāra in prison. Vaidehī (韋提 in the present text), his mother, becomes weary of living in “this defiled world which is filled with hells, hungry-ghosts, and brute creation”, and implores the Buddha to let her know about “the Pure Land where there is no sorrow or trouble”. Then, the Buddha manifests innumerable Buddha-lands of ten quarters and shows them to her. Thereupon, Vaidehī makes choice of the Western Pure Land of Blissfulness (安養 in the present text) and requests the Buddha to teach the way by which she can be reborn there. Thus begins the exposition of the Meditation Sūtra.

② Yüan 緣 literally means ‘hem’, ‘connexion’, ‘to follow’, ‘to depend upon’. As a Buddhist technical term, this is used in combination with yin 因. 因 (hētu) is direct cause whereas 緣 (pratya) is indirect cause. Accordingly, 緣 is ‘condition’, ‘occasion’, ‘circumstances’, and ‘the concurrence of indirect causes’. The ‘time’ here rendered is rather a free translation.

③ Ching-pang 淨邦, lit. ‘pure-country’ (sukhāvati). But here in the present text, it seems, it stands for ‘the exposition of the teaching of Pure Land Buddhism’.

④ Chi 機 means ‘that which works’. As a Buddhist term, it has several meanings. According to Chih-i’s Fa-hua-hsüan-i, 智頤, 法華玄義卷六, there are three kinds of working of 機. (1) a secret working; hence 機根 secret inner workings of human mind, capacities, capabilities; 機類 groups of human beings classified according to their capacities. (2) A correlative working; hence there are people 機 who stand in reciprocal relation to Dharma 法 or doctrine 教. (3) An appropriate working; 機宜 opportune devices. 機 is used in the present text in its first meaning. It refers to the 機根 people’s capacities. Here it is rendered as ‘the world’.

⑤ An-yang 安養, literally meaning ‘peaceful pleasure’, is one of the Chinese equivalents for Sanskrit ‘sukhāvati.’ Among a variety of synonyms, the most popular one is chi-lo 極樂. Cf 無量壽經下：諸佛告菩薩令觀安養佛。同下：奉事億如來，飛化徧諸刹，恭敬歡喜去，還到安養國。同下：宜各勤精進，努力自求之，必得超絕去，往生安養國。阿彌陀經：從是西方過十萬億佛上，有世界名曰極樂。同：其國衆生無有衆苦，但受諸樂，故名極樂。

⑥ ‘Manifested personalities’ is the rendering of ch’üan-hua 權化 which literally means ‘a temporarily transformed’. By ‘a manifested person’ or ‘a manifested being’ is meant a Buddha or a Bodhisattva who assumes human form or any other being’s form and as such performs a variety of works with a view to saving all sentient beings. Ajātaśatru, Dēvadatta, and Vaidehī are considered by Shinran Shōnin as ‘manifested personalities’. It is solely for the benefit of the people of the future that they took part in the ‘Tragedy of Rājagṛha’ and gave occasion to the rise of Pure Land Buddhism. Cf. Tao-ch’o, An-lo-chi, 道綽, 安樂集：是以，韋提大士，自爲，及哀愍末世五濁衆生，輪迴多切，徒受痛燒故，能假遇苦緣，諮開出路豁然，大聖加慈，勸歸極樂。

⑦ Ch’un meng 群萌, literally meaning ‘all kinds of green growth’, is one of the synonyms of ‘all sentient beings’ 一切衆生. ‘Multifarious beings’ in this English translation. Cf. 無量壽經：欲拯群萌惠以真實之利。觀經玄義分：灑甘露潤於群萌。六要鈔：言群萌，是衆生名。衆生心中有佛種故，蒙法潤，類生佛道芽。此理普通一切衆生故云群萌。

⑧ ‘The Most Powerful One of the World’ 世雄 is Sakyamuni. In the Wu-liang-shou-ching, the Buddha is praised by Ānanda to be showing Himself in the five excellent forms of virtues. This is one of these forms. Cf. 無量壽經：今日世雄住佛所住。

⑨ ‘To bestow’ correspond to 惠。Cf. 無量壽經上：如來以無蓋大悲，弘哀三界，所以出興於世，光闡道教，欲極群萌，惠以真實之利。(Tathāgatas, in their unbounded compassion, take pity upon the three worlds. The reason why they appear in this world is to bring forward all the teachings of enlightenment, so that they can save all kinds of beings, giving them the benefit of truthfulness.)

⑩ Ni-pang-shan-t'i 逆謗闢提 refers to the three kinds of beings who are not easily to be enlightened. They are; (1) 逆 (2) 謗, and (3) 闢提。逆 is the abbreviation of 五逆罪 five grave offences and those who committed them. The five grave offences are: (1) 殺父 the murder of the father (pitṛi-ghāta); (2) 殺母 the murder of the mother (matṛi-ghāta); (3) 殺阿羅漢 the murder of the arhat (arhat-ghāta); (4) 出佛身血 making the Buddha bleed in his body with an evil intention (tathāgatasyāntike duṣṭacitta-rudhirot-pādanam); (5) 破和合僧 disturbing the peace of the Brotherhood (saṃgha-bheda). 謗 is the abbreviation of 誹謗正法 (sad-dharma-apavādaka) slandering the right Dharma and those who committed that offence. 闢提 is the abbreviation of 一闢提, the transliteration of Ichchantika, who are destitute of the Buddha-nature. They are said to be “those who do not believe in the laws of causality, who have no feeling of shame, who have no faith in the working of karma, who are unconcerned with the present, with the future, who never befriend good people, who do not follow the teaching of the Buddha” (一闢提者，不信因果，無有慚愧，不信業報，不見現在及未來世，不親善友不隨諸佛所說教誡)，As to ‘three beings who are not easily to be enlightened’. 大般涅槃經第十一現病品：加葉世有三人，其病難治。一謗大乘。二五逆罪。三一闢提。如是三病，世中極重。悉非聲聞緣覺菩薩之所能治。

故知。圓融至德嘉號，轉惡成德正智。難信金剛信樂，除疑獲證真理也。①

By this it is clearly known, that the Honoured Name of the Supreme Virtue, perfect in all kinds of merits and unhindered in all sorts of activities, is no other than the Right Wisdom, converting a badness into a goodness; and, that the Adamantine Faith, which it is rare to obtain, is just the True Way where doubts are removed and the attainment is realised.

① This section is the praise of Name and Faith. The O-mi-t'o-ching 阿彌陀經 (Smaller Sukhāvativyūha) is the source of this eulogy. The first part: Name, its contents, and its nature. The second part: Faith, its characteristics, and its function.

② “The Honoured Name”, 嘉號, is the name of Amitābha Buddha. Substantially, it is the six Chinese charactered Name 南無阿彌陀佛。The Name has been achieved by Amitābha Buddha as an instrument to save all sentient beings, with His Original Vow as its primary mover, and with His five kalpas meditative works and His myriad kalpas good practices as its second and third movers. Thus, the name is perfect with all kinds of merits, and has the power of penetrating the heart of all beings however much they may be clad in evil passions or evil karmas. Hence 圓融至德嘉號 (the Honoured Name of the Supreme Virtue, perfect in all kinds of merits and unhindered in all sorts of activities).

③ The Right Wisdom 正智。Shinran Shōnin mentions of ‘the Nembutsu of Wisdom’ in the Shōzōmatsu Wasan (Psalms on Three Times). The Name or Nembutsu is con-

sidered to represent or to embody the wisdom of the Buddha. The wisdom of the Buddha has a power to convert a badness into a goodness and is likened to a fallen drop of medicine which changes the nature of whole matters. It is for this reason that an old Shin believer said: "With us, there are an infinite number of hindrances; they are gone, however, when we practise the Nembutsu". Where Shin thus speaks of the wisdom of the Buddha i. e. *prajñā*, there we discern the difference which exists between Shin Buddhism and Christianity, however similar they may appear in their outward appearances. *Prajñā* is one of the fundamental ideas of Buddhism which is common to all its varied thoughts. As to the importance of the idea of *prajñā*, see D. T. Suzuki, 'Philosophy and Religion of the *Prajñāparāmīṭā*' Essay on Zen Buddhism 3rd series, p 207 et seq.

④ The Faith 信樂. Literally, 信 means 'to believe', 樂 'to wish'. Thus 信樂 is to believe in the Original Vow of Amida and wish to be reborn in His Pure Land. The faith is the thing difficult for us to obtain, for His Vow intends to save all beings including even the evil ones and is beyond the ordinary way of thinking. It is indeed inconceivable as it transcends the laws of causality. Hence it is difficult for us to believe in. Hence again the faith is a kind of rarity for us to obtain. This faith, however, when once attained, is as indestructible as diamond. Therefore, it is stated here as the above.

⑤ "The True Way" 真理 refers to the way by which we can attain Buddhahood; the truth of Buddhism.

爾者，凡小易修真教。愚鈍易往捷徑。大聖一代教，無如是之德海。捨穢欣淨，迷行惑信，心昏識寡，惡重障多，特仰如來發遣，必歸最勝直道，專奉斯行，唯崇斯信。^①

Therefore, this is the Trueful Doctrine for the ordinary and the small to practice with ease; and the Short Cut for the dull and the ignorant to tread on smoothly. In all the doctrines taught by the Great Holy^② in his life-time, there is none that can be compared with this merit-ocean.^③ Those people who loathe this defiled world and desire to be reborn in the Pure Land, and yet are stumbling upon the problem of work and feel uneasy about the matter of faith; and those people who, being dull in mind and small in knowledge, must bear the burden of grave offences and struggle in the path of much hinderances—they should especially put their trust on Tathāgata's out-sending exhortation^④ and determinedly press forward on the straight road of the most excellence.^⑤ Let them exclusively devote themselves to this work and solely apply themselves to this faith!

① In this section the writer mentions of the excellence of Pure Land Buddhism and recommends people to receive it.

② The Great Holy 大聖 i. e. Śākyamuni

③ The Merit Ocean, 德海, refers to the Name of the Buddha, as it is filled with merits like the ocean which is filled with various treasures. This is transferred to the doctrine, as the substance of the doctrine is the Name of the Buddha. Cf. *hin-kuang-ming-tsuī-shèng-wang-ching* 金光明最勝王經 (Suvāraṇaprabhāsottamarājasūtra) 卷十：我今畧讚佛功德，於德海中唯一滄。

④ Tathāgata's out-sending exhortation 如來發遣 cf 善導, 玄義分, 仰惟, 釋迦此方發遣。彌陀即彼國來迎。彼喚此遣, 豈容不去也。In the Parable of the Two Streams, the traveller who hesitates in the middle of two streams hears a voice coming from the eastern bank urging him to proceed: "Only determinedly go on this way. You shall never die. If you stay, you stay, you must surely die." This is the out-sending exhortation of Śākya-muni.

⑤ The most excellent straight road, 最勝直道, refers to the Original Vow of Amida. cf. 信卷末: 本願一實之直道. In the Parable of Two Streams, the voice calls from the western bank: let you come, with right thought and singleness of mind. Walk on, without hesitation. I will protect you, fear not being drowned in fire and water. The traveller, encouraged by the calling voice as well as by sending voice, he goes the way placed between the two streams of fire and water.

噫, 弘誓強緣, 多生叵值。真實淨信, 億劫叵獲。遇獲行信, 遠慶宿緣。若也此廻覆蔽疑網, 更復逕歷曠劫。誠哉, 攝取不捨真言。超世希有正法。聞思莫遲慮。

Oh! The Powerful Force^① of the Grand Vow! It is rare for us to come across with it, —indeed, it is rare even in many lives. Oh! The Pure Faith of Truthfulness! It is difficult for us to embrace it —indeed, it is difficult even in myriad kalpas. If it should happen to you that you had the good luck to meet this faith and this work, you should gratefully turn your thought toward the far distant past and take utmost delight in your ancient connexions.^② In case you should become encompassed by the net of those doubts^③ in this time again, you would have to make your further transmigration for eons of kalpas. So, indeed! This is really the Truthful Word that embraces all and forsakes none^④; and the Right Dharma that surpasses the world and is found only in rare occasion.

① The Powerful Force 強緣 (adhipatipratyaya). The idea is near adhiṣṭhāna, 威神力, the spiritual power of the Buddha which is added to a Bodhisattva and sustains him through his course of discipline. 善導, 觀經玄義分: 正由託佛願, 以作強緣, 致使五乘齊入

② The ancient connexions, 宿緣, (pūrvapratyaya), commonly said of good connexions.

③ doubts, 疑網, lit. 'doubt-net'. In Buddhist symbolism, the net is used in the following three figures. (1) Difficulty of getting out of it. (2) Sifting. (3) Covering. Here the net is used in the meaning of (3) covering.

④ The Truthful word that embraces all and forsakes none, 攝取不捨真言. cf. Truthful Word 真言 Tao-ch'o, *An-lo-chi*, 道綽, 安樂集: 採集真言, 助成往益. that embraces all and forsakes none 攝取不捨 觀無量壽經: 光明徧照十方世界念佛衆生攝取不捨。

爰, 愚禿釋親鸞, 慶哉, 西蕃月支聖典, 東夏日域師釋, 難遇今得遇, 難聞已得聞。敬信真宗教行證, 特知如來恩德深。斯以, 慶所聞, 嘆所獲矣。

Here, I, *Gutoku Shaku Shinran*,^①—I feel that I am ever so much

happy. Those sūtras and śāstras by the Holy Masters of *India*^② and *Yueh-chih*^③ and those commentaries by the Great Masters of *China*^④ and *Japan*^⑤—I was happily able to meet them for all those difficulties that surrounded the circumstances, and to hear them in spite of all the hindrances that attended the rare occurrence. I was made to set my reverential faith in the Doctrine, the Work, and the Attainment of the True Religion. Being thus led, I am made aware of the Tathāgata's benevolent activities^⑥ particularly deep upon me from the beginningless past. It is for this reason that here I take delight in whatever words I have ever heard and sing praise to whatever acquirements I have ever received.

① Gutoku Shaku Shinran 愚禿釋親鸞。Literally, 愚 means (1) 'foolish' or (2) 'ignorant'. 禿 (1) 'baldheaded' or (2) 'not-long-haired'. In the "Retrospect" of the present work, Shinran Shōnin wrote about himself in the following way: "Therefore, I am neither a monk nor a layman. So I will take the word of 禿 and make it my surname." We take this remark to mean that, being neither a tonsured monk nor a long-haired layman, he is only a non-descript humble existence. Thus Shuran Shōnin, calling himself 愚禿, expressed that he has nothing to be proud of; he is only the follower of Amida's Faith. 釋 is the name of the clan to which Śākyamuni belonged. So, all the followers of the Buddha are called 釋, as they are of 釋 clan in the sense that they are the descendants of Śākyamuni. Cf. 最澄, 願文: 伏尋思己行迹, 無戒竊受四事之勞, 愚痴亦成四生之怨。……於是愚中極愚, 狂中極狂, 塵禿有情, 底下最澄, 上違於諸佛, 中背於皇法, 下闕於孝禮。增一阿含經第二十一: 爾時四大河入海已, 無復本名字, 但名為海此亦如是, 有四姓云何孝四刹利婆羅門長者居士種於如來所剃除鬚髮著三法衣出家學道無復本姓, 但言沙門釋迦子。高僧傳卷第五: 初魏晉沙門依師為姓, 故姓各不同。〔道〕安以為大師之本莫尊釋迦。乃以釋命氏。後增一阿含, 果稱四河入海無復河名。四姓為沙門皆稱釋種。既懸與經符。遂為永式。

② India, 西蕃, lit. the western country

③ Yüeh-chih, 月支, lit. moon-division. Cf. 後漢書七十八: 大月氏國氏晉支居藍氏城前書下並同居藍氏城藍氏作盤氏西接安息四十九日行本去長史所居六千五百三十七里去洛陽萬六千三百七十里

④ China, 東夏, lit. eastern-kingdom.

⑤ Japan, 日域, lit. sun-region

⑥ The benevolent activities, 恩德, one of three kinds of Buddha's activities, 三德: (1) Seeing through all things, 智德; (2) Destroying all evil passions and karmas, 斷德; (3) Benefitting all sentient beings, 恩德。

大 無 量 壽 經 眞實之教
淨土眞宗

TA-WU-LIANG-SHOU-CHING

DOCTRINE OF TRUTHFULNESS
PURE LAND TRUE RELIGION

顯 眞 實 教 一
顯 眞 實 行 二
顯 眞 實 信 三
顯 眞 實 證 四
顯 眞 佛 土 五
顯 化 身 土 六

Of the Truthful Doctrine, I
Of the Truthful Work, II
Of the Truthful Faith, III
Of the Truthful Attainment, IV
Of the Land of True Buddha, V
Of the Land of Manifested Body, VI

THE PURE LAND DOCUMENT OF THE
TRUTHFUL DOCTRINE. BOOK I

顯淨土眞實教文類 I

COMPILED BY GUTOKU SHAKU SHINRAN

愚 禿 釋 親 鸞 集

謹按淨土眞宗，有二種廻向，一者往相，二者還相。就往相廻向，有眞實教行信證。

When the reverential reflexion is bestowed upon the Pure Land True Religion,^① it becomes manifest that are two kinds of *ekō* in it. The one is the *ekō*^② of the going-forward aspect^③; and, the other, the

ekō of the coming-back aspect.^① As to the *ekō* of the going-forward aspect, we can distinguish in it the Truthful Doctrine, the Truthful Work, the Truthful Faith, and the Truthful Attainment.

① The Pure Land True Religion. 淨土真宗 Cf. 淨土真宗, 無量壽經: 眞實之利。散善義: 眞宗回過。法照, 五會法事讚: 念佛成佛是宗。

② 'ekō' 廻向 is the key word of Shin Buddhism. It literally means "to turn (廻)" the result of one's own merit and "to direct" (向) it to somebody else. It is *pariṇāmaṇā* in Sanskrit. Originally the conception is purely mahāyanistic. It appeared with the rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The *Prajñāparamitā Sūtra* is considered to be one of the earliest Mahāyāna literatures where we find this idea. As to the significance of this doctrine of merit-transference, D. T. Suzuki writes of it as follows. "The doctrine of merit-transference is really one of the significant features of Mahāyāna Buddhism and its development marks the start of a new era in the history of Buddhist philosophy. Before this, the accumulation of merit or the practice of good deeds was something which exclusively concerned the individual himself; the doer was responsible for all that he did, good or bad; as long as he was satisfied with the karma of his work, to enjoy happiness or to suffer disaster was his own business and nothing further was to be said or done about it. But now we have come to deal with a different state of affairs. We are no more by ourselves alone, each is not living just for himself, everything is so intimately related that anything done by anybody is sure to affect others in one way or another. The individualistic Hinayāna has now become the communistic Mahāyāna. This was really a great turning point in the evolution of Buddhist thought." (The Shin Sect of Buddhism, *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. VII. No 3-4) Now, as to this merit-transference, the general Mahāyāna idea of it is that merit created anywhere by any being is turned over to any other being desired or towards the enhancement and prevalence of Enlightenment in the whole world. And it was commonly understood that it was to turn over our own merits. With the Pure Land Buddhists, especially with Shinran Shōnin, however, this was not the case. With them, the idea of merit-transference is that merits created by Amitābha Buddha are turned over to us who are too weak to work out our own emancipation. Shinran Shōnin realised in full measure this merit-transference of Amitābha in His powerful will of Original Vow and its fulfilment. He read the characters 至心廻向, contained in the passage of the sūtra informing the fulfilment of Vow, "to be turned by Amida towards us in His sincere heart," instead of the customary way of reading "for us to turn towards Amida in our sincere heart". There are two other places where Shinran Shōnin read in the same way, one in Tauluan's Commentary and the other in Shan-tao's Commentary. No doubt, it is due to the fact that a living faith dictated Shinran Shōnin in understanding the sūtra or the commentaries. Thus, when merit-transference is made to originate exclusively from Amida, we see where the idea of other power comes from. We can almost say that the entire structure of the Shin teaching is dependent upon this Shinran's interpretation of the principle of merit-transference. D. T. Suzuki writes: "This movement on the part of the founder of the Shin school of Buddhism was indeed a leap—technically known as crosswise leap 橫超. Instead of making one continuous progress ahead which has no end or rather which is a never-ending course, he abruptly turns towards Amida and throws himself up into his arms. The Mahāyāna way of thinking hitherto pursued by the Jiriki doctors is here completely reversed."

③ The going-forward aspect, 往相, is the aspect in which we are seen to be reborn

in the Pure Land. This is the way of our attaining Buddhahood, the way that profit oneself 自利, and the way that enlightens oneself 自覺. It is one aspect of Buddhist discipline.

④ The coming-back aspect, 還相, is the aspect in which we are seen to come back to the defiled world from the Pure Land where we were born. This is the way of our performing the work of salvation, the way that profits others 利他, and the way that enlightens others 覺他. It is another aspect of Buddhist discipline.

In Shin Buddhism, both of these two kinds of Buddhist discipline consist in the Name given to us by the power of Amida's Original Vow.

夫顯真實教者，則大無量壽經是也。斯經大意者，彌陀超發於誓，廣開法藏，致哀凡小選施功德之寶。釋迦出興於世，光闡道教，欲拯群萌，惠以真實之利。是以，說如來本願，為經宗致，即以佛名號，為經體也^①。

Now, the Truthful Doctrine, substantially expressed, is no other than the Ta-wu-liang-shou-ching. The core of this sūtra is as follows. Amitābha Buddha makes vows in a way that surpasses the world, develops the Dharma-resources for the sake of all sentient beings, and, taking pity upon the ordinary and small, preferably gives them the merit-treasure^②; while Śākyamuni Buddha appears in the world, promulgates the doctrine of enlightenment,^③ and, wishing to save multifarious beings, bestows upon them the truthful benefits.^④ This being the case, the essential of the sūtra consists in the exposition of the Tathāgata's Original Vow, and its substance lies in the Buddha's Name.

① Here is stated the perfect agreement of Amida's intention and Śākyamuni's wish.

② The merit-treasure, 功德之寶, refers to the Buddha's Name, as it is perfect with all kinds of merits.

③ The teachings of enlightenment, 道教, refers to all the doctrines of Holy-Path Buddhism.

④ The truthful benefits, 真實之利, refers to the Original Vow of Amida.

何以得知出世大事。

大無量壽經言。今日世尊，諸根悅豫，姿色清淨，光顏巍巍。如明鏡淨，影暢表裏。威容顯曜，超絕無量。未曾瞻覩殊妙如今。唯然，大聖，我心念言。今日世尊，住奇特法。今日世雄，住佛所住。今日世眼，住導師行。今日世英，住最勝道。今日天尊，行如來德。去來現佛，佛佛相念。得無今佛念諸佛邪。何故威神光光乃爾。

By what is it known that this is the most important cause for which the Buddhas appeared in this world?

It is said in the Ta-wu-liang-shou-ching. "Today, O! Bhagavat! I see all your senses are radiant in serene bliss. The colour of your

body shines in immaculate cleanliness. The glory of your face stands high enthroned over all heights. You are like a mirror bright and clean. On its either face, reflection is equally dazzling. The dignity of your appearance is indeed brilliant and magnificent. The grandeur is really beyond description. I have no remembrance of having observed in the buddha such an extraordinary wonder as I see now before me. Really it is! O! Great Master! The thought has come to me. Today, you are the most exalted of the world: for you are abiding in the dharma of unique excellence. Today, you are the most powerful of the world: for you are abiding in the abode of the Buddhas. Today, you are the eye of the world: for you are abiding in the walk of the leader. Today, you are the most distinguished of the world: for you are abiding in the most excellent way. Today, you are the most exalted of the dēvas: for you are doing the works of all the Tathāgatas. All the Buddhas of past, future, and present, are said to be each contemplating all others. May it not be possible then that the present Buddha contemplates all the other Buddhas? How does it happen so, that the awe-inspiring influence of yours is thus much dazzlingly prevailing?

於是世尊，告阿難曰，諸天教汝來問佛邪。自以慧見問威顏乎。阿難白佛，無有諸天來教我者。自以所見問斯義耳。

Thereupon, Bhagavat told Ānanda, saying; “How is it, O, Ānanda? Is it due to some dēvas who have instructed you to come to ask the Buddha, or is it solely through your insight of wisdom, that you have inquired of me about the august countenance of the Buddha? Ānanda, said to the Buddha: “No dēva has ever come to instruct me. It is solely through my own observation that I have asked you about the meaning of this matter.”

佛言。善哉，阿難所問甚快。發深智慧，真妙辯才，愍念衆生，問斯慧義。如來以無蓋大悲，矜哀三界。所以出興於世，光闡道教，欲拯群萌，惠以真實之利。無量億劫，難值難見，猶靈瑞華，時時乃出。今所問者，多所饒益。開化一切諸天人民。阿難當知。如來正覺，其智難量，多所導御，慧見無礙，無能過絕。^{已上}

The Buddha said: “Well said! O Ānanda! Your question pleases me much. In you awakened are deep wisdom and wonderful eloquence and out of compassion for all sentient beings, you have inquired of me about the deep meaning of this matter. The Tathāgatas, in

their unbounded compassion, take pity upon the triple world. The reason why they appear in this world is to promulgate all the doctrines of enlightenment, and, wishing to save multifarious beings, bestows upon the truthful benefits. The occurrence is rare,—it is most rare,—even in millions of innumerable kalpas. It is, therefore, difficult for us to be born in the time of the Buddha. Much more is it so to come into His presence. It is like (coming across with) the flowering of Audumbara tree, which takes place on so rare an occasion. In what you have now inquired of me, there is much that will do good (to the world). It will enlighten all the *dēvas* and men. O *Ānanda*, you should know. The *Tathāgatas* have realised the most perfect enlightenment. Their knowledge is beyond measurement. There is much in it that will lead discipline (the world). Their insight of wisdom knows no impediment. Nothing can stand in its way.

無量壽如來會言。阿難白佛言，世尊，我見如來光瑞希有故發斯念。非因天等。佛告阿難，善哉善哉，汝今快問。善能觀察，微妙辯才，能問如來如是之義。汝爲一切如來應正等覺，及安住大悲，利益群生，如優曇華希有大士出現世間故問斯義。又爲哀愍利樂諸有情故，能問如來如是之義。^①

It is said in the *Wu-liang-shou-ju-lai-hui*.^① “*Ānanda* told the Buddha, saying; ‘O! *Bhagavat*! The thought has come to me, as I have seen the *Tathāgata* who is abiding in such a rare splendour. It is never due to the influence of *dēva* or any other being.’ The Buddha said to *Ānanda*, ‘Well said! O *Ānanda*! Well said! To my great satisfaction you have put this question. You have considered the matter well and excellently. With your subtle understanding and eloquence, you have asked the *Tathāgata* about the why of such an event. For the sake of all the *Tathāgatas*, *Arhats*, *Samyaksambuddhas*, who firmly abide in great compassion and perform the work of benefiting all sentient beings, who each come to this world as a *Bodhisattva* on so rare a moment in so much the same way as the *Audumbara* flower blooming on so rare a moment, you have inquired of the Buddha about the why of this matter. Taking pity on all sentient beings and being desirous of their welfare, you have inquired of the *Tathāgata* about the why of such an event.”

① 無量壽如來會，*Wu-liang-shou-ju-lai-hui*, 2 vols, translated by 菩提流支 *Bodhiruci* of India in the dynasty of T'ang. One of the so-called twelve versions of the *Wu-lang-shou-ching*, See p. 2 of the present number of the *Eastern Buddhist*.

平等覺經^①言。佛告阿難，如世間有優曇鉢樹，但有實無有華。天下有佛，乃華出耳。世間有佛，甚難得值。今我作佛，出於天下。若有大德聰明善心，緣知佛意。若不妄在佛邊侍佛也。若今所問普聽諦聽。_目

It is said in the P'ing-teng-chiao-ching.^① “The Buddha told Ānanda, saying; ‘There are in the world Audumbara trees which have fruits but no flowers. Yet they will come to bloom, when a Buddha appears in the human world. In like manner, there are in the world the Buddhas who are not easily to be seen. Yet I have now made myself the Buddha, and come to the human world. You, Ānanda, who are richly-endowed, clear-sighted, and good-intentioned, you know well the Buddha’s will, even before it is not yet expressed. Indeed, you have not been by the Buddha side in vain! Really, you have not waited upon the Buddha to no purpose! So excellent is that which you have now inquire of me. I will now answer your question. Carefully listen and be known clearly!

① 平等覺經, The full title is 無量清淨平等覺經, Wu-liang-ch'ing-ching-p'ing-t'eng-chiao-ching 4 vols, translated by 支婁迦讖 Lokarakṣa of 月支 in the period of Later Han. One of the so-called twelve versions of the Wu-lang-shou-ching. See p. 2 of the present number of the Eastern Buddhst.

憬興師云。今日世尊住奇特法依神通輪所現之相非唯異常亦無等者故。今日世雄住佛所住住普等三昧能制衆。今日世眼住導師行五眼名導師行引導衆生無過上故。今日世英住最勝道佛住四智獨秀無匹故。今日天尊行如來德即第一義天以佛性不空義故。阿難當知如來正覺即奇特之法。慧見無礙逃最勝之道。無能遏絕即如來已之德。上

Ching-Hsing the Master^② said. “Today, O! Bhagavat! You are the most exalted of the world: you are abiding in the dharma of unique excellence’:

because those forms of the Buddha presented as they are by his miraculous power,^③ are no mere things of extraordinariness but things of no comprableness.

‘Today, O! Bhagavat! You are the most powerful of the world: you are abiding in the abode of the Buddhas’:

because the Buddha, abiding in the all-things-sameness-samādhī,^④ submits all the maras and the powerful dēva king.^⑤

‘Today, O! Bhagavat! You are the eye of the world: you are abiding in the walk of the leader’:

because the Buddha, possessing those five eyes^⑥ called the walk of the leader, leads

all sentient beings, and there is no surpassing Him.

‘Tody, O! Bhagavat! You are the most distinguished of the world: you are abiding in the most excellent way’:

because the Buddha, possessing four wisdoms,^⑥ superprominently stands alone, and there is no equal of Him.

‘Today, O! Bhagavat! You are the most exalted of the dēvas: you are doing the work of the Tathāgatas’:

because the Buddha, who is the dēva of the highest truth,^⑦ is in every way active in accordance with the nature of the Buddha.

‘O! Ānanda! You should know. The Tathāgata has attained the perfect enlightenment’:

which is the dharmas of uniqueness.

‘The insight of wisdom knows no obstruction’:

the most excellent way is stated.

‘Nothing can stand in its way’:

that is the works of the Tathāgata.”

① Ching-Hsing, 憬興, a Korean Buddhist. He wrote the Commentary to the Wu-liang-shou-ching. 無量壽經連義述文贊。

② Miraculous power, 神通輪。Buddha’s activities in three ways, i. e. of body, of mouth, and of mind, are called three wheels 三輪。Buddha’s bodily activities, in which he performs various wonders, are called 神通輪。

③ All-things-sameness-samādhi, 普等三昧。Samādhi called Samantānugata (universally same).

④ The powerful dēva king, 衆魔雄健夫, the māra king of the sixth heaven. He is so powerful that he is called 雄健天。

⑤ Five eyes 五眼: (1) physical eye; (2) celestial eye; (3) wisdom-eye; (4) dharma-eye; (5) Buddha-eye.

⑥ Four wisdoms, 四智: (1) the great perfect mirror wisdom, 大圓鏡智, (ādarśa-jāṇna); (2) wisdom of attaining the sameness of things, 平等性智, (samatā°); (3) wisdom of attaining excellent observation, 妙觀智, (pratyavekṣāṇa°); (4) wisdom of attaining skillful achievement, 成所作智, (Kṛtyānuṣṭhāna°).

⑦ The dēva of highest truth, 第一義天。We have five dēvas: (1) human dēva (human kings); (2) dēva by birth (dēvas of three worlds); (3) dēva of purity (Śrāvakas and Pratyeka-buddhas); (4) dēva of truth (Bodhisattvas); (5) dēva of highest truth (Buddha). Cf. 慧遠 無量壽經義疏卷上: 天有五種。如涅槃說。一者世天, 謂世人王, 名爲天子。二者生天, 謂四王天, 乃至非想。三者淨天, 謂須陀洹, 至辟支佛。四者義天, 謂諸菩薩, 以解諸法空寂義故。五者第一義天, 謂佛如來, 解知佛性不空義故。

爾者, 則此顯真實教明證也。誠是, 如來興世之正說。奇特最勝之妙典。

一乘究竟之極說。速疾圓融之金言。十方稱讚之誠言。時機純熟之真教也。應知。

These, then, are clear evidences testifying (that the Ta-wu-liang-shou-ching is) the Truthful doctrine. It is indeed the Right Teaching, for the promulgation of which the Buddha has appeared in this world. It is truly the Wonderful Cannon, which is unique and the most excellent in its kind. It is really the Consummate Teaching, which is the most thorough of all the ekāyāna doctrines. It is indeed the Golden Word, which instantly and immediately makes us perfect in all kinds of merits. It is truly the Trustworthy Word, which is praised and admired by all the Buddhas of ten quarters. It is really the Truthful Doctrine, for which the time and the world is now completely matured. It should be known.