A NEW WAY OF APPROACH IN BUDDHIST STUDIES

—In the Light of Comparative Philosophy—

Hajime NAKAMURA
Tokyo University

A. The Problem of Comparative Studies

I. Reflection upon Buddhist Studies in the Past

It has been a common tendency of scholars of Buddhism in both the East and the West that they launch their studies chiefly in philological respects. Scholars first collect materials necessary for their own studies. Among materials manuscripts are most important for studies of Buddhist thought; inscriptions, coins, masterpieces of art, and archaeological findings are also occasionally very helpful for them. Manuscripts are edited carefully and critically by competent scholars who have strictly been disciplined in a philological method. To edit fundamental texts critically is the first step to take. Then these texts should be translated into languages familiar to the scholars, and critical annotations should be set forth in footnotes. With this process alone scholars can engage themselves in scientific studies. Having these materials at their command they launch their studies in various directions. In the field of philology they compare similar words with each other, explain them etymologically, make their meanings clear; they compile vocabularies and dictionaries; they systematise grammar of languages. Using these results of studies they write history of various fields of culture, and describe geography or ethnography as thoroughly as possible. This is the way scholars of ancient cultures take, and scholars of Buddhist culture are not exceptions to it.

In the field of Buddhist studies there have been published so many works of excellent scholarship. In so far as philological studies are concerned, I would venture to say that there is left nothing which might be found fault with in works of masters of various countries. However, with regard to philosophical studies, it is likely that there has been left much which should have been done up to now.

There have been published many works entitled "Indian Philosophy" or "Buddhist Philosophy" in both the East and the West. However,

are they all really helpful to the intellectuals of various countries who are seriously in search of truth of life? Do they really give any consolations to those who are suffering from mental afflictions? I would remind the readers of the comment by the late Th. Stcherbatsky, the Russian scholar, who said "Works on Buddhist Idealism published in the West are *desparately unintelligible.*" Even in Japan where traditional scholarship of Buddhist Idealism has been preserved, few intellectuals will understand works on it by Japanese scholars. Traditional Buddhist terms are, so to speak, words of the inhabitants of Mars in the eye of ordinary Japanese. Many works hithertofore published may be adequate and accurate in philological respect, but are of little significance as works of philosophy. Works on Buddhist philosophy should be of some significance in philosophical respect also. It is lamentable that there has been published no work in the field of Buddhist philosophy which may be comparable to Windelband's *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie.*

Then, how shall we be able to attain such an aim? By which means shall we be able to fulfiil such a task? I think that, in order to bring up philosophical studies, we have to pass the trial of comparative philosophy. Linguistics or the science of religions in the true sense of the word has to be carried on only after comparative philology or comparative religion is established, following the meeting of different civilizations. The same process must hold true with philosophical studies also. In the following, I want to discuss the significance and necessity of a comparative history of philosophy. Only through the process of this sort of comparative studies Buddhist philosophy as such will be discussed and evaluated to the effect that such studies will lead to enlightening human mind in future.

II. Introductory Remarks to a Comparative History of Philosophy

Today we are thrown into a world-wide tumult and agitation. The day of peace is far from us; the way to peace stretches out a long way before us. However, we must not despair, however difficult our situation may be. We must strive for peace to the utmost. Also for the attainment of the aim of peace and happiness of humankind, we must promote a mutual understanding of peoples in the world. As a student of Indian philosophy who takes much interest in the way of approach of comparative philosophy which has become so recently prevalent in various countries, I would like to outline briefly the development of philosophy Eastern and Western in comparison with each other.

What is called Indian philosophy came to be known to the West early in the nineteenth century, through the efforts of the Sanskrit scholars in Europe. Yet it was not esteemed highly by Western philosophers at first as it should have been. As they read works relevant to Indian philosophy, they could not grasp its real significance. They did not want to place and arrange it in the same class as Western thought or philosophy. Many instances of this scorn can be easily cited. The German philosopher, Hegel, wrote his ingenious "History of Philosophy", in which he banished India and China together with their philosophies from the principal chapters of his thought, regarding the achievements of these almost unknown civilizations as a kind of prelude to the rise of the "real" philosophy, which, according to him, was an invention of the Greeks. This attitude of reluctance to confer the title "philosopher" upon the immortal thinkers of India and China still prevails. One of the highly regarded history of philosophy books is W. Windelband's work.[1] In this work he also refuses to qualify Oriental thought as "philosophy". He admits the fact that the Chinese and the Indians of earlier antiquity were not wanting either in abundance of information on single subjects, or on general views of the universe. However he argues:

> But as the former (the information of the Chinese) was gained in connection with practical needs, and the latter (the information of the Indians) grew out of mythical fancy, so they remained under the control, partly of daily need, partly of religious poetry; and, as was natural in consequence of the peculiar restraint of the Oriental mind, they lacked, for their fruitful and independent development, the initiative activity of individuals.[2]

In the twentieth century, however, several scholars have taken Oriental philosophy into account. Many editions and translations of Indian texts have been published. And people now have been able to read many religious and philosophical works of India through these English translations, and therefore they have come to feel much more interested in Indian thought than ever. Some of them have come to an understanding that Indian philosophy has something valuable and elevating. An outstanding example of this is Aldous Huxley's assertion, which is as follows:

A hundered years ago, hardly anything was known of Sanskrit, Pali or

1 *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie,* von Wilhelm Windelband, Neunte und zehnte, durchgesehene Auflage, besorgt von Erich Rothacker, Tuebingen, Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1921.

E.Tr. *History of Philosophy with Special Reference to the Formation and Development of Its Problems and Conceptions.* Authorized translation by James H. Tufts. New York, 1921.

2 *op. cit.* E. Tr. p. 24.

> Chinese. The ignorance of European scholars was sufficient reason for their provincialism. Today, when more or less adequate translations are available in plenty, there is not only no reason for it, there is no excuse. And yet most European and American authors of books about religion and metaphysics write as though nobody had ever thought about these subjects, except the Jews, the Greeks and the Christians of the Mediterranean basin and Western Europe. This display of what, in the twentieth century is an entirely voluntary and deliberate ignorance is not only absurd and discreditable; it is also socially dangerous. Like any other form of imperialism, theological imperialism is a menace to permanent world peace.[3]

This assertion is not wrong. The existence of "philosophy" among Indians and other Oriental peoples was admitted even by Greeks. About 300 B. C. Seleucus Nikator, a Greek monarch, sent an ambassador, Megasthenes to the court of the sovereign of all India who was at Pataliputra (Patna). Megasthenes wrote a book describing the social and cultural conditions of India. In one passage of his work he gives an introduction to the Indian thought of those days, which says:—

> All that has been said regarding nature by the ancients (=early Greeks) is asserted also by philosophers out of Greece, on the one part in India by the Brachmanes, and on the other in Syria by the people called the Jews.[4]

After the rise of the study on the Sanskrit language, editions and translations of philosophical works of India have been published year after year chiefly by Western scholars. Indian and Japanese scholars also have made some contributions. Today a large amount of books are available to us.

And yet a problem remains. Is there any conception which corresponds to the conception of "philosophy" in the Western world? Upon this question we can mention two Sanskrit words, *darsana* and *anviksiki*. The word "darsana" originally means "seeing the truth", especially "intuition". But in a wider sense of the word it applies to all views of reality taken by the mind of man. So it can mean any philosophical system. Buddhism is one darsana from the eye of the Hindus. Sankara's Vedanta philosophy is another darsana. *Anviksiki* means any philosophical system which has been built up by reasoning of human mind only. It excludes other philosophical systems which admit the highest authority of the traditional Vedic Scriptures. This term is applied to

3 Aldous Huxley: *The Perennial Philosophy*. New York and London 1945, p. 200.

4 *Megasthenes Fragment* No. 42. *Clemens Alexandriae*: Strom. I. p. 305 D (ed. Colon. 1688). J. W. McCrindle: *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*. London, Truebner & Co. 1877, p. 103.

materialists and Samkhya and Yoga philosophers. In application, *anviksiki* is narrower in sense, while "darsana" is wider. The use of these terms by the Indians proves that ancient Indians also held the conception of philosophy comparable to that of the Greeks.

The bigotry of the traditionally minded Western intellectuals is attacked by Western Sinologists also. Professor Huges says:

> For a very long time in south and north-western Europe those highly influential people, the teachers of the youth, impressed on their pupils that our civilization owed a great debt to ancient Greece and Rome: so much so that in matters of right thinking and good taste what Greece and Rome thought and did at their highest levels was in the nature of a standard...Yet we are fully consious today of the fact that our civilization has burst its bands and is moving inexorably into a future which, whatever its debt to our Graeco-Roman past, and all other pasts, cannot be estimated solely in terms of our Great Tradition.[5]

The opinion that Oriental philosophy also should be kept in mind is becoming more and more prevalent among intellectuals. Recently Bertrand Russell published a voluminous history of philosophy. This work is entitled *A History of Western Philosophy*.[6] This title contains the limiting adjective "western", which implies the present-day opinion that beside the stream of philosophical thought in the West there are other currents in the East.

Then, how are we able to explain the relationship between Western and Eastern thoughts? All philosophers, Eastern and Western, have dealt with the same problems of the universe and man, and attempt to explain the same subjects. If we can find the similarity between Western and Indian thoughts through the processes of development of philosophy during more than two thousand years, we shall also be able to take notice of the fact that some philosophical notions are common to both; that is, many philosophical problems are universal to humankind and should be treated not only historically, but also from a genuinely philosophical viewpoint. The fact that truth can be found among all peoples and in all creeds, has been acknowledged through many centuries by scholars.

When expressions are the same in different languages, we should not assume their difference, unless we are able to show on other grounds than that they belong to two different traditions and that they do not

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5 E. R. Hughes: *Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times* (Everyman's Library), pp. XII-XIII.

6 Bertrand Russell: *A History of Western Philosophy*, New York, Siman and Schuster Inc., 1945.

mean the same. Nearly the same problems are dealt with in East and West. Therefore students who would like to study Eastern and Western philosophy from the philosophical viewpoint should find out philosophical problems which are common to humankind and yet have been differently dealt with by different peoples. Problems should be common and yet in reality the results of thinking of philosophers differ with peoples.

Moreover, the philosophical problems and the methods of attacking them have not always been the same throughout the history of philosophy of nearly two and a half thousand years. They differ in ages. Each age or period has its own tinge. Concerning this Mrs. Langer says:

> Every age in the history of philosophy has its own preoccupation. Its problems are peculiar to it, not for obvious practical reasons—political or social—but for deeper reasons of intellectual growth. If we look back on the slow formation and accumulation of doctrines which mark that history, we may see certain groupings of ideas within it, not by subject-matter, but by a subtler common factor which may be called their "technique". It is the mode of handling problems, rather than what they are about, that assigns them to an age. Their subject-matter may be fortuitous and depend on conquests, discoveries, plagues, or governments; their treatment derives from a steadier source.[7]

In the history of Indian philosophy also we find some problems which were particularly conspicuous in the days of the rise of cities and others which were particularly stressed in the mediaeval age and so on. Ways of thinking differed in ages even among the same people.

Of course I know that there is a strong protest against the notion of historical development among religionists, saying that the highest truth should be eternal and not changeable in ages. The Catholic Church of Christianity claims that it has never changed. Buddhist priests also claim that Buddhism has never changed. The Buddhist Order in South-Asiatic countries has adhered to the same canon for more than two thousand years. Even in the Northern countries of Asia where the canon of early Buddhism is not esteemed, the Buddhists still claim to have kept the unchanging words of the Buddha himself. In reality, however, the men who form the Church have lived under the influence of changing circumstances, and of varying ideas. This has made them believe differently from those who lived before them. They may repeat the same form of words, they may hold to the same form of creed, but the interpretation of the words is in a sense somewhat different, and the creed

7 Susanne K Langer: *Philosophy in a New Key*. (Mentor Book), New York, the New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1948, p. 1.

is stressed in different proportions on its various aspects.

Men's thoughts and actions differ greatly according to their different surroundings and social backgrounds, even on its religious side. It is only under similar conditions that men's thought and action can be everywhere similar: and it is chiefly because those conditions are never precisely the same, that the development of religious beliefs shows its peculiar and particular aspects in each stage of history. Therefore, even concerning religious thought historical study is indispensable.

We do not deny that some traditional ways of thinking are very obstinate and recalcitrant. Concerning India where things are regarded to be stagnant, we can say, though peoples of different races and cultures have been pouring into India from early days, Hinduism has been able to maintain its supremacy, and even the proselytising creeds backed by political power have not been able to coerce the large majority of Indians to their views. However, at the same time we must also admit that some kinds of thought have appeared and prevailed in particular periods. Therefore, a history of thought exists.

Each assertion by philosophers and by thinkers possesses a significance reaching far beyond the time and the country where it was first advocated. We claim for it an inestimable value for the whole race of mankind. Whatever new paths the philosophy of the future may strike out, this principle will remain permanently unshaken. However, we cannot but notice historical character of the ways of posing philosophical problems. This accounts for the possibility of history of ideas as such.

Comparative study of a history of philosophy from such a viewpoint is not only of historical importance, but also necessary to philosophy itself. Only by experimenting with different philosophical conceptions in comparison with each other and relating them with the innermost essence of our life, we can hope to get at the truth. Paul Deussen asserts:[8]—Whether philosophical speculation is going on the stars, or not, we do not know and we shall hear nothing of it for the time being. But if human or pseudo-human races should live on other planets of our solar system or on possibly innumerable planets of other solar systems and if they should produce a culture and philosophy in its fullest flower, then we can probably assume that this philosophy of the other worlds will show a large-scale concordance with the philosophy of our planet in its essential developments and results. Suppose that a man of Mars

8 Paul Deussen: *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie.* I, 1, 4 Aufl. Leipzig, F. A. Brockhaus, 1920, S. 7;

Die Sutras des Vedanta, 2 Aufl. Leipzing, F. A. Brackhaus, 1920, Vorrede, S. 5–6.

or Venus should arrive on our globe in a shell discharged by a rocket cannon, and we are able to hear the philosophy of the men of Mars or Venus. We would listen to the results of their philosophical thinking with great interest, and we would investigate them carefully in comparison with our own. If there are found to be any differences, then we would ponder upon which philosophy is right, and where they coincide, the propriety of our philosophy would be proved, although on that occasion the natural and inevitable sophistications of pure reason should be taken into account. Something like this situation has become actuated by our acquaintance with Indian philosophy, for Indian philosophy has developed independently from the Western one.—Of course coincidence of thought can not be regarded as proof for its veracity. But comparison of different opinions upon the same problem will enable us to deepen our thinking.

This kind of comparative study is much more indispensable because we now live in a world which desires to unify itself. This is acknowledged by everyone as an undeniable fact confronting us. And yet the efforts to view currents of philosophical history of humankind as an integral one are still lacking among us. We can no more escape from being members of a world community than we can leap out of the atmosphere around us. Therefore, comparative study upon philosophical currents is of great importance. On this point we are in accord with Dr. Radhakrishnan's opinion. He says:

> For the first time in the history of our planet its inhabitants have become one whole, each and every part of which is affected by the fortunes of every other. Science and technology, without aiming at this result, have achieved the unity. Economic and political phenomena are increasingly imposing on us the obligation to treat the world as a unit. Currencies are linked, commerce is international, political fortunes are interdependent. And yet the sense that mankind must become a community is still a casual whim, a vague aspiration, not generally accepted as a conscious ideal or an urgent practical necessity moving us to feel the dignity of a common citizenship and the call of a common duty.[9]

Keeping this purport in mind, the history of philosophy Eastern and Western will be outlined here.

In writing an article on this sort of history of philosophy, I should like to show my own interpretation on these two points:

1) problem-approach
2) comparative study.

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9 S. Radhakrishnan: *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*, London, Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1939, p. 2.

The chief emphasis of our assertion should be laid upon the development of what is of the most importance from a philosophical viewpoint. Our concern is to give a history of problems and solutions by thinkers. And it should be given as a connected and interrelated whole.

In order to fulfil this purpose, however, we must avoid any *a priori* logical construction. Based upon as many facts as possible, we must fulfil an unprejudiced investigation which we hope would be all-sided. Our study should be positive.

Keeping this purpose in mind, the biographical and bibliographical material will not be given in detail. Purely individual careers and traits of each thinker, which may be a welcome object for learned scholarship but afford no philosophical interest, will also be skipped.

On the other hand, the social relations of each age in which the philosophers concerned lived should be taken into account. This is of course a really difficult task, considering the present situation of our sciences, but efforts should always be made by us for the cause of humanity.

The chapters and passages will be set up under the headings of philosophical conceptions. The content is to be arranged according to philosophical problems. Most of them would be common to all philosophical currents of the world. Thus in dealing with the particular current Indian philosophy as a sort of measure or axis, we can discuss philosophical problems in general which are very often common to all humankind. Original texts should be cited in translation, in order to avoid too twisted interpretations which have often been done by many historians of philosophy. If my ways of interpretation or comparison are wrong, the readers themselves would be able to detect and correct them. This is merely an approach to delineate a comparative history of philosophy which does not exclude the possibility of other types. Buddhist philosophy also should be examined from this viewpoint, and by that means alone Buddhist philosophy will be able to help develop philosophy of humankind which should be united in the future. Any criticism or suggestion by the readers will be most appreciated.

B. Ethical Values of Buddhism in the Light of the World Civilization

I. The Middle Path

Universal norms (*dhamma*) which have been stressed by Buddhism should be applicable to everyone. They do not conflict with human nature. The way of Gotama Buddha is called the Middle Path because

it avoids extremes. One extreme is the outright pursuit of worldly desires; and the other, the severe, ascetic, physical exerting discipline of the ascetics. Thus the trait of Buddhist ethics is humanistic.

A similar thought was advocated by Chinese sages also. Mencius tells us that 'Confucius was one who abstained from extremes.' (IV, 2; X., cf. *Analects* XI, 15.) The *Mean in Action* is one of the great Chinese classics. The doctrine of the Mean was was held by Aristotle also. The Buddhist teaching, however, represents a unique standpoint.

The doctrine of the Middle Path that the Buddha proclaimed is related even in religious life to the fundamental attitude of Buddhism which is mainly represented as the absence of special dogmas. The universal norms of human life are constant, although the ways of applying them vary. Therefore in each case they must be applied in the most applicable way. The general principles must be adjusted to the infinitely varying circumstances of actual life. Otherwise, there would be a danger that minute outer regulations may encroach unduly on the moral autonomy of the individual. In order to avoid this danger the Buddha advised his disciples to resort to the spirit of the Middle Path. This fundamental character has been preserved up to now throughout the Buddhist world, although its application differs with periods and people. Today each Buddhist prescribes to the principle of the Middle Path.

II. The Value of Man

Just as in other religions, Buddhism also regarded gods, men and animals alike as beings obsessed by delusion in the mundane world. Buddhism admits to six kinds of living beings, viz. gods, men, animals, ghosts, fighting spirits and the damned in various hells. Following the general tendency of a popular faith among the lower classes, Buddhism also inserted the concepts of gods, ghosts and the damned in hells. In Buddhism gods are the beings who are superior to men in mystic power and intuitive knowledge, but nothing more. The Buddhist conception of gods is comparable to that of gods by Epicurians. Gods were also regarded as confering good fortune upon devout men who observe moral disciplines. "The man who has the grace of the gods, good fortune he beholds". (*Mahaparinibbana-suttanta,* I, 31, vol. II, p. 88.)

Then where does the value of man lie? Birth as a man is essential for the appreciation of the *dharma*. Gods are too happy to feel a dislike for conditioned things, and they live much too long to have appreciation for the teaching of impermanence. Animals, ghosts, fighting spirits and the damned lack clarity of mind. Therefore the Buddhas appear as men, and the human state is in general more favorable than any other to

the attainment of enlightenment. Not merely the Buddha himself, but many of his followers are supposed to have achieved Nirvana and to have been in a position to compare this experience with what may be experienced in ordinary conciousness. According to Buddhism, what distinguishes man from other beings, is his aptitude for goodness, love for the *dharma,* and consequently a compassion for other beings. Anyhow, these characteristics, which are substantially the same, could be regarded as what makes mankind as such.

In the West, Aristotle says that appetites and desires are shared in common by men and animals. What distinguishes man from the animal is the power of reason. Mencius holds that 'the faculty of the mind is thinking'. He advanced the view of the natural goodness of man, that he can not bear to see his fellowmen suffer. The way of apprehending the essence of man by these philosophers, however, is rather rationalistic, whereas the Buddhist apprehension is more humanistic.

The Buddha is very often called "a Teacher of Gods and Men", just in the same way as Xenophanes, the Greek philosopher, said: "There is one god, among *gods and men* the greatest, not at all like mortals in body or in mind". (*Fragment* 23, tr. by Freeman) In Buddhism, the Buddhas stood at the very top rung of the ladders. The Buddha was regarded as leading both gods and men alike.

III. The Problem of Evil

Men are always afflicted by their own evils. The most dangerous obstacles to man are the Ten Bonds, according to early Buddhism. These Bonds are:—

1. Delusions about the soul (Sakkaya-ditti)
2. Doubt (Vicikiccha)
3. Dependence on works (Silabbata-paramasa)
4. Sensuality (Kama)
5. Ill-will (Patigha)
6. Desire for rebirth on earth (Rupa-raga)
7. Desire for rebirth in heaven (Arupa-raga)
8. Pride (Mana)
9. Self-righteousness (Uddhacca)
10. Ignorance (Avijja)

These evil dispositions should be conquered. The conquering of the Ignorance, the last one, which is the fundamental principle motivating our mundane existence, will finally lead men to release. The disciples of the Buddha, both clergy and the laity, must be rid of these evils gradually

through their own efforts. To have broken the first three Bonds is what Christians should call *conversion,* and what Buddhists call 'the entrance into the stream'. Having attained the final 'assurance', there can then be no permanent relapse. Sooner or later, in this birth or another, final salvation is assured, according to the teaching of Southern Buddhism. So, to avoid evil dispositions is encouraged. "Evil deeds are done from motives of partiality, enmity, stupidity and fear. But inasmuch as the Noble Disciple is not led away by these motives, he does no evil deed through them". (*Sigalovada,* 5)

The fact that man is defiled by vices was lamented by ancient sages in other countries also. Confucius tells us that the things that make him sad are "that virtue is not cultivated, that knowledge is not made clear, that people hear of duty and do not practise it, that people have evil in themselves and do nothing to improve". (*Lun Yu* VII, 3.) The Gospel of John reads: 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds ere evil'.

To illustrate the Buddhist view of sin: King Ajatasattu killed his father in order to occupy the throne of the king. But, having heard the sermon of the Buddha, he expressed the feeling of repentence before the Buddha. "Sin has overcome me, Lord, weak and foolish and wrong that I am, in that, for the sake of sovereignity, I put to death my father, that righteous man, that righteous king! May the Blessed One accept it of me, Lord, that do so acknowledge it as a sin". The Buddha replied: "Verily, O king, it was sin that overcame you in acting thus. But inasmuch as you look upon it as sin (accaya), and confess it according to what is right, we accept your confession as to that. For that is custom in the discipline of the noble ones, that whosoever looks upon his fault as a fault, and rightfully confesses it, shall attain to self-restraint in future", (*Digha-nikaya,* Vol. I, p. 85.)

The Buddhist conception of sin is of ethical significance. "The first obvious contrast between Buddha and the mystics who have been in greater or lesser degree neo-Platonic, appears in their respective attitudes towards the problem of evil. For Plotinus evil has no intrinsic reality, it is only an absence of the good. One may recognize in Plotinus himself an element of genuine spirituality.....and one may at the same time insist on the danger of this notion that evil is mere deprivation, it tends to discredit everything that is felt negatively and restrictively, to associate the pursuit of the good with expansive longing rather than with renunciation.....The reaching out towards the 'infinite' in this sense is at all events alien to a teacher who held that the higher will in man

is primarily an inhibition, and who is in this sense an uncompromising dualist". (I. Babbitt: The *Dhammapada,* Introduction, pp. 105–106.) To the Buddha evil is something to be conquered; inhibition should be observed assiduously. Evil is not mere negation of reality. Viewed from the religious standpoint, good action as such is never a means to the final end. Prince Sumana once asked the Buddha what would be the difference between two men, one of whom had been bounteous in a former life and one not. He replied that there would be no difference at all after they have attained release. (*Anguttara-Nikaya,* III, p. 32.) And yet devout Buddhists will practise good actions spontaneously, without considering the results of actions concerned.

In the Buddhist faith there is no conception of original sin. There are none who would be damned forever. Eternal damnation is absolutely inconceivable for the Buddhists. Even such hideous crimes as patricide are forgiven by deep repentence. The path of religion leads through morality; but when one approaches the goal, one enters into an entirely different element; the saint who has attained the calm of Nirvana is said to be 'beyond good and evil'. What is called 'good' in our daily life is very often defiled with worldly desire. The ideal situation should be perfectly pure, so it is said to transcend secular good and evil. In a situation like this there are no differences between the release of one person and that of another, because they are all purified.

It seems that Shinran might be, at the first glance, the only exception to what we have just predicated. Shinran reflected: We should realize what calamity is involved in the mere fact of our being alive. All living beings are sinful. We cannot live without committing sins. We are all karma-bound. Only through meditating on the reflection that we are sinful, we come to feel compassionate to others. The attitude of compassion can be founded only by grace.

> "We are wicked and sinful, but through the virtue of faith
> We try to do good for the welfare and peace of the world——
> yet not through our own power, but through that of Another (i.e. Amitabha.)" (Inagaki's Tr. pp. 99–100.)

All men, whether they are honest or criminal, are, without any distinction, admitted to Amida's Pure Realm. Faith in Amida's grace is the one and only condition of admission. We are equally sinful, and Amida is a being of compassionate love in the genuine form comparable to the highest God, but unlike the Christian God, he is not a judge. There is no conception of punishment by Amida. The Shin sect holds the view that the evil are rightfully eligible for salvation by Amitabha Buddha.

Shinran brought this idea of Buddha's grace to its extreme conclusion.

A saying of Honen's goes like: "Even a bad man will be received in Buddha's Land, but how much more a good man!" Shinran turned this to the reverse—"Even a good man will be received in Buddha's Land, but how much more a bad man!" To elaborate on this, a good man may be able to save himself by his own merit. But it is no to be expected that a bad man can save himself by his own merit; he needs the grace of the Buddha. He has no other means. Now even a good man who does not necessarily need grace can be saved; how much more a bad man who cannot be saved otherwise than by grace. The sinner has only to believe in the Grace of Amitabha, and the Pure realm would be his. Here faith became the sole requisite to salvation; all of the other Buddhist moral-philosophy was swept away.

IV. The Attitude of Compassion

True wisdom consists, not in metaphysical sophistication, but only in practical knowledge, and its fundamental principle should be the attitude of compassion. This attitude of compassion or benevolence should be taken as the fundamental principle in our social life. Compassion or love to one's neighbors is very highly esteemed. Compassion or love is expressed by the Sanskrit word "maitri" or the Pali word "metta", which are both derivatives from "mitra" (friend). So, both words literally mean "true friendliness". If we allow the virtue of compassion to grow in us, it will not occur to us to harm anyone else, any more than we would willingly harm ourselves. In this way we diminish our sentiment and love of self by widening the boundaries of what we regard as ours. It is by inviting everyone's self to enter our own personality, that we break down the barriers which separate us from others. There is a saying that goes, "As a mother even at the risk of her own life watches over her own child, so let everyone cultivate a boundless love towards all beings. Let him cultivate towards the whole world—above, below, around—a heart of love unstinted, unmixed with the sense of differing or opposing interests. Let a man maintain this mindfulness all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting, or lying down. This state of heart is the best in the world". (Suttanipata, No. 8) Even enemies should be loved. Sariputta, a disciple of the Buddha said:

"Love should be felt for one's own kin,

And so for enemies too, and the whole wide world
Should be pervaded with a heart to love——
This is the teaching of all the Buddhas. "(Milindapanha, p. 394)

One should forgive them. Then what is the basis for this altristic attitude in Buddhist philosophy? Meditation on the elements which constitute our "Self" (dharmas) dissolves other people, as well as oneself, into a conglomeration of impersonal and instantaneous elements. It reduces each individual into the five heaps of constituent elements, plus a label. If there is nothing in the world except bundles of constituent elements, instantaneously perishing all the time, there is nothing which friendliness and compassion could work on. This way of meditating or explaining, however, is to abolish our deep-rooted egoism in our own existence; it aims at cherishing compassion and love towards others. By dissolving our human existence into component parts one can get rid of the notion of Self, and through that meditation we are led to a limitless expansion of the self in a practical sense, because one identifies oneself with more and more living beings. The whole world and the individuals are intimately and indissolubly linked. The whole human family is so closely knit together that each unit is dependent upon other units for its growth and development. To bring out the goodness in us, each one of us should try to reproduce in his own wheel of life the harmony with great universe which comprises us and enables us to exist. "All actions, by which one acquires merit, are not worth the sixteenth part of friendliness (metta), which is the emancipation of mind; for friendliness radiates, shines and illumines, surpassing those actions as the emancipation of mind,—just as all the lights of the stars are not worth the sixteenth part of the moon-light, for the moonlight, surpassing them all, radiates, shines and illumines". (*Itivuttaka,* No. 27) Love or friendliness could be called the highest virtue.

The golden rule is expressed in the maxim: 'Doing as one would be done by, kill not nor cause to kill'. (attanam upamam katva, *SBE.* X, pt. i, p. 36) The universal ideal of the Golden Rule is found practically in other religious systems also. In the Hindu Epic *Mahabharata* (XIII, 113, 9; XII, 260, 22; V, 39, 72) we have the versions of the Buddhist teaching (Dhammapada 129; 132). Lao Tzu taught us to do good to those who are good to us, and also to those who are not good to us. (Tao Teh Ching, p. 63) Confucius, "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you". There can be no doubt that this proverb is stated in the negative form, not once but three times (*Analects* XII, 2; XV, 23; *The Doctrine of the Mean* XIII), but a negative statement does not necessarily mean a negative idea. The Chinese have always understood it to be positive. The Confucian ideal of *Jen* is comparable to Buddhist *Maitri* and Christian love. Love was stressed by Jews also in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (B. Russell: *History of*

Western Philosophy, p. 320). Christ said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me". (*Matthew* XXV, 40)

Love is achieved by being accompanied by other mental attitudes. The four states are often described as the Sublime Conditions (*brahma-vihara*). They are Love, Sorrow at the sorrows of others, Joy in the joys of others, and Equanimity as regards one's own joys and sorrows (*Digha-nikaya* II, 186, 187). Each of these feelings should be deliberately practised, beginning with a single object and gradually increasing till the whole world is suffused with such kinds of feeling.

The spirit of love should be expressed in all phases of our life. One should not hurt others. "Putting away the killing of living beings, he holds aloof from the destruction of life. The cudgel and the sword he has laid aside, and ashamed of roughness, and full of mercy, he dwells compassionate and kind to all creatures that have life". (*Digha-nikaya* II, 43, vol. 1, p. 62) One should not offend others even by speech. "Our mind shall not waver. No evil speech will we utter. Tender and compassionate will we abide, loving in heart, void of malice within. And we will be ever suffusing such an one with the rays of our loving thought. And with that feeling as a basis we will ever be suffusing the whole world with thought of love, far-reaching, grown great, beyond measure, void of anger or ill-will". (*Majjhima-nikaya* I, 129)

Towards contempt or injury afflicted by others, one should have forbearance.

> " 'He abused me, he beat me,
> Overcame me, robbed me'.
> In those who harbor such thoughts
> Their anger is not calmed.
> Not by anger are angers
> In this world calmed.
> By meekness are they calmed". (*Dhammapada* 2–4)
> "Let one conquer wrath by meekness.
> Let one conquer wrong by goodness.
> Let one conquer the mean man by a gift
> And a liar by the truth". (*Dhammapada* 223 cf. *Majjhima-nikaya*, 21)

In China also Mencius held the same opinion: "The man of human-heartedness has no enemy under Heaven". (*Mencius* VII, b, 3.) Others may hate me, but I do not hate him. Such a one who has experienced the unity loves the whole world. One should not worry about bitter and sarcastic comments offered by others. The Buddha gives us a valuable instruction: "Amongst men there is no one who is not blamed. People blame him who sits silent and him who speaks, they also blame

the man who preaches the middle path". (*Dhammapada* 227) (cf. Fo. 1713–1734) In the Bible we find a similar fact evidencing Buddha's saying: "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He has a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners" (*Matthew* XI, 18–19). This meek and compassionate character was exemplified in the life of Gotama himself. In reading the Pali scriptures one is impressed with the strong personal influence exercised by the Buddha over the hearts of his fellow-men. He was regarded as a very meak and compassionate man by others. All what he did represented ways of peace. Anger, in fact, had no place in his character; anger played no role in his preachings. The birth stories of the Buddha, often extravagantly, exalt his great compassion and renunciation. (*Jataka,* No. 316 etc.) The ways of the description might seem to be too phantastic, yet their purport is characteristically altruistic.

It is often reported that Buddhism has softened the rough warrior races of Tibet and Mongolia, and nearly effaced all traces of their original brutality. In Japan also, according to the statistical reports, cases of murder or assault are relatively rare in districts where the Buddhist influence is strong.

This attitude of compassion motivates one to esteem highly the natural disposition of man. Japanese Buddhism tends to be most conspicuous in that respect. Even Buddhist ideas were preached with a close reference to matters of love, and sexual love is considered not to be incompatible with religious matter. Zen Buddhism in China did not seem to emphasize the idea of benevolence. There is not a single reference made to the word "benevolence" in the well-known scirptures of Chinese Zen Buddhism. After Zen Buddhism was brought into Japan, however, it came to emphasize deeds of benevolence.

The spirit of tolerance and compassion of the Buddhist made it impossible to cultivate a deep hatred even toward sinners. There existed hardly any punishment that was cruel in those days when Buddhism flourished. It was also reported as so in regards to ancient India by the Chinese pilgrims. It holds true with some of the Buddhist countries in Southern Asia. In Japan also, during the Heian period, capital punishment was never practised for a period of nearly three hundred and fifty years.

V. Service to Others

We human beings can live only by mutual aid to each other. Thus we should always be ready to do service to others, whenever possible.

Man should make great efforts to do greater service to other men than our parents and relatives do to us. (cf. *Dhammapada* 43) In the days of the Buddha, a sick brother was once neglected by the other inmates of the monastery. The Buddha washed him and tended him with his own hands, saying afterwards to the careless monks, who would have been eager enough to serve him, "Whosoever would wait upon me, let him wait upon the sick". He claims his oneness with humanity so that services to the sick or the destitute are in reality rendered to himself. (*Mahavagga* VIII, 26) Christ also said: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me". (*Matthew* XXV, 40)

Men should be true friends to each other.

> "Some friends are bottle-comrads; some are they
> Who (to your face) dear friend! dear friend! will say.
> Who proves a comrade in your hour of need.
> Him may ye rightly call a friend indeed". (*Sigalovada* 13)

A true friend is defined in detail.

"Four are the friends who should be reckoned as sound at heart:—the helper: the friend who is the same in happiness and adversity; the friend of good counsel; the friend who sympathizes.

On four grounds the friend who is a helper is to be reckoned as sound at heart:—he guards you when you are off your guard, he guards your property when you are off your guard; he is a refuge to you when you are afraid; when you have tasks to perform he provides a double supply (of what you may need).

On four grounds the friend who is the same in happiness and adversity is to be reckoned as sound at heart:—he tells you his secrets; he keeps secret your secrets; in your troubles he does not forsake you; he lays down even his life for your sake.

On four grounds the friend who declares what you need to do is to be reckoned as sound at heart:—he restrains you from doing wrong; he enjoins you to do what is right; he informs you of what you had not heard before; he reveals to you the way to heaven.

On four grounds the friend who sympasizes is to be reckoned as sound at heart:—he does not rejoice over your misfortunes; he rejoices over your prosperity; he restrains anyone who is speaking ill of you; he commends anyone who is praising you". (*Sigalovada* 21–25)

The virtue of giving something to others was especially stressed in Buddhism "To him who gives shall virtue be increased". (*Mahaparinibbana-suttanta* 4, 43. *DN*. Vol. II, p. 136) The Buddha said: "The charitable man is loved by all; his friendship is prized highly; in death

his heart is at rest and full of joy, for he suffers not from repentence; he receives the opening flower of his reward and the fruit that ripens from it. Hard it is to understand: By giving away our food, we get more strength, by bestowing clothing on others, we gain more beauty; by founding abodes of purity and truth, we acquire great treasures". (*Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king* 1516–1517) In Paul's charge to the elders, he asserted: "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said. It is more blessed to give than to receive". (*Acts* XX, 35)

The act of giving is compared to sowing seeds on soil. "Charity bestowed upon those who are worthy of it is like good seeds sown on a good soil that yields an abundance of fruits. But arms given to those who are yet under the tyrannical yoke of the passions are like a seed deposited in a bad soil. The passions of the receiver of the alms choke, as it were, the growth of merits." (*The Life or Legend of Gautama,* by P. Bigandet, p. 211) The Order or holy personalities were called Fields of Merit (punnakkhetta), for planting seeds of merit in them, i.e. doing good to them, is a source of future compensation to the benefactor. Christ also told a similar parable.—A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bore fruit an hundredfold.—The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruits to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. (*St. Luke* VIII, 4–15. cf. *Matth.* XIII, 24–27) The similarity between these two parables strikes us astonishingly. There seeds signify charity, here the word of God. However, the Buddha did not want to mention any word of God. He did not assume any absolute existence nor supernatural personality. The truth universal to all mankind should be good will, benevolence, to others, and charity is nothing but a form of its manifestation. There is no need of the word of God.

When the conservative Buddhist Order became a big organization with huge endowments, the monks did not render much service to the common people who wanted more. These monks of conservative Buddhism were apt to be very self-complacent and self-righteous. Being fond of solitude they despised the common people; they did not want to partake of the worries and sufferings of the common lot. As the protest against this kind of attitude, some religious leaders advocated a new form of Buddhism, which is known today under the name of Mahayana. They were in close contact with the common people and felt their needs. They vehemently attacked the self-complacent and the self-righteous attitude of the Conservative Buddhists.

The new Buddhism was called the Mahayana, or Great Vehicle, in contrast with the old Buddhism, which was depricated as the Hinayana, or Small Vehicle. The new Buddhism named in this manner because its system is *large* and vast; it can save *many* living beings, and its *doctrine is superior.* The word "maha" is explained as being comprized of these three kinds of the above meaning. Mahayana greatly stressed altruism. Mahayana Buddhists think that the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas must devote themselves to be of service to mankind and all living beings. In China many institutions, such as hospitals, orphanages, etc., were established for philanthropic purposes, being motivated by the Buddhist spirit. Particularly in Japan, Buddhism has always emphasizes the idea of working for the people, a concern which is deeply manifested in its vast panoply of social work. Of course, the concern for social welfare can be found in Indian and Chinese Buddhism as well. But in Japan, even priests of the Ritsu sect, originally a development of Theravada Buddhism, went into mundane and service activities. In the interests of benefitting mankind, monks were even allowed to accumulate money to cure the sick, to lay roads and bridges and such social practices which have been strongly prohibited by Theravada.

VI. Conclusion

So far we have discussed some aspects of the fundamental principles of ethics of, chiefly Early, Buddhism, As the writer thinks that the readers are mostly followers of St. Shinran, he would like to give a few words on this point. Although there might seem to be some discrepancies between the sayings of the scriptures of Early Buddhism and those by Shinran at the first glance, the readers will come to perceive that the above-mentioned spirit or attitude underlies the teaching of St. Shinran, if they get deeply to the philosophical basis of variously delivered teachings. He might be called the man who expected to realize the

spirit of Buddhism in daily life of ordinary lay people as we are. Considering the fact that the ascetic life is not fit for practice in the present-day world and that it exists only in the sphere of our imagination, his teachings should be paid much more attention, not only by his followers, but also by those who profess other religions.

Nowadays a new struggle is going on over ideologies, or, we might say, ideological terminologies. Such a kind of struggle is what the Buddha would not approve. We would venture to say that Buddhism is the only religion free from bigotry. It is to be called the religion for peace, at the same time. The way to peace and happiness is far, but we will definately endeavor for the cause of peace and happiness of mankind, observing the precepts of the Buddha, so that the ideal realm will be realized in this world.