

IASBS NEWSLETTER



国 際 真 宗 学 会

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SHIN BUDDHIST STUDIES

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Greetings from the President

Dear IASBS Members

I wish to begin by expressing my appreciation to Dr. Leslie Kawamura, his conference committee, University of Calgary and the North American District for hosting the 13th IASBS Biennial Conference. I am sure that the attendees would agree with me that the conference was enjoyable and the papers were wide-ranging in content and the discussions – during and beyond the sessions – were lively and constant. The food was delicious, and the three meals taken together brought us closer. And the excursion on the third day to the famed Banff was enthralling to say the least.

The approximately 80 delegates from as far away as Australia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Brazil joined larger contingents from the North American, Hawaii and Japan Districts. This number was a significant increase from the 30 or so who attended the last time the conference was held in Calgary in 1997.

A total of 40 papers were presented in two concurrent sessions, of which about eight were given in Japanese. And it was heartening to witness a larger number of younger participants, for the enlisting of larger number of younger scholars to IASBS has been one of the stated goals of the current administration.

At the conference, the Steering Committee met for over three hours to recommend a number of important administrative changes (please see detailed report in this newsletter), which were all approved at the general meeting. One of the approved items is to make our journal, *The Pure Land*, available online one year after its publication. This is a significant move toward greater dissemination of IASBS activities to the larger academic and religious world. This, too, is in line with the call to all IASBS members to sharing your knowledge and passion with a wider circle of people.

The next IASBS conference will be held at Ryukoku University in Kyoto from 14-16 June 2009. I hope to see many of you there.

Best wishes,

Kenneth K. Tanaka

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Conference panel discussion - "Our Conceptions and Portrayals of Amida in the Contemporary World." From right to left: Kenneth Tanaka (Musashino University) , Tomoyasu Naito (Ryukoku University), Carl Becker (Kyoto University), Daniel Frederick (Kyoto University of Foreign Studies) and Lisa Grumbach (Institute of Buddhist Studies).

**REPORT ON THE THIRTEENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SHIN BUDDHIST STUDIES,  
HELD AT THE ROSZA CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
AUGUST 2007**

**Gregg Heathcote  
(Oceania & East Asia District)**

The designated theme of this year's IASBS conference was Shinran's famously seminal description of himself as "Neither Monk nor Layperson". At the venue on the lovely campus of the University of Calgary, 86 registered delegates from as far afield as Canada, USA, Japan, Taiwan, Brazil and Australia gathered to consider this and related matters. We were thankfully able to do so in temperate comfort, enjoying beautiful weather conditions unlike the sweltering summer heat experienced at past conferences.

In the course of a short opening ceremony from 10 to 10.30 on the morning of August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the assembled participants were welcomed and briefly addressed by our Conference Co-ordinator, Leslie Kawamura; followed by Professor Rowland Smith, Dean of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Humanities; Professor Eliezer Segal, Acting Head of the University's Department of Religious Studies; Reverend Orai Fujikawa, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of Canada; and Professor Kenneth Tanaka, President of the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies. Participants were informed that organization of the 2007 conference had proven an arduous task beset with problems, keenly reminding us of our great collective indebtedness to the wholehearted efforts of Leslie Kawamura, and to those who generously assisted Leslie in making the success of this event possible nonetheless.

**Keynote Address**

Between 10.30 and 11.30am, our assembly then benefited from an excellent keynote address, delivered by Dr. Mark Blum of the State University of New York (Albany), titled "Religious Values that Define a Tradition – Rennyō's Voice in Premodern, Modern, and Postmodern Shinshū". Dr. Blum brought home to his listeners the extraordinary impact of Rennyō upon the development of Shinshū doctrine, and upon the phenomenal growth of the Hongwanji during times of the utmost difficulty and danger - an astonishing transformation from a tiny temple into a religious institution of enduring eminence. This story of extraordinary leadership was shown to be even more striking given the humbling personal circumstances of much of Rennyō's life, being born illegitimate and enduring real long-suffering and grinding poverty.

Doubtless grateful for their own more congenial personal circumstances, delegates then adjourned for a buffet lunch together in the Ballroom of the nearby MacEwan Student Center, after which we returned to the Rosza Center and concurrent conference sessions commenced.

### **Session One – Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1.30 to 3pm**

Three papers were delivered during the first session. The presenters and the titles of their papers were: Shogo Watanabe (Toyo University) “Various Phases of Bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism”; Shoken Takekoshi (Otani University) “Neither Monk nor Lay: Based on the Postscript of Kyogyoshinsho”; and Hoshu Matsubayashi (Seattle Buddhist Church) “Contemporary Examination of Amida and the Pure Land”.

### **Session Two – Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1.30 to 3pm**

The second session was chaired by Jessica Main, featuring four papers. Presenters and paper titles were: Naoyuki Ogi (Institute of Buddhist Studies) “Neither a Monk nor One in Worldly Life and *Gutoku* : Understanding Shinran’s Social Consciousness”; Takashi Imai (Graduate School of Musashino University) “The Concept of “Pain” in Terminal Care: An Approach Based on Pure Land Practice”; Jessica Main (McGill University) “Other Agency in the Jodoshinshu: Neither Monk, Layman, Nor Conventional Moral Actor”; and Gregg Heathcote (University of Newcastle, Australia) “Dharma’s Spirited Humour and the Good Sense of Nembutsu Nonsense: Comical Follies of Buddha and Bombu Cruising Collapsible Rivers”.

### **Session Three – Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3.30 to 5pm**

The third session featured four papers. Presenters and their paper titles were: Hironobu Ito (Otani University) “Living in the Vow, Together”; Hidetsugu Takayama (Musashino University Research Institute for Buddhist Culture) “Societal Action of Inouye Enryo: The Challenge of a Modern Buddhist”; Xiao Yue (Bukkyo University) “The Names of the Buddha (*Amituo/Wuliangqingjing*) in the Early Recension of the *Larger Sukhavativyuha-sutra*”; and Makio Takemura (Toyo University) “Salvation and Social Activity – Concerning the Problem of Aspect of Returning” .

### **Session Four – Friday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3.30 to 5pm**

The fourth session consisted of the Otani University Panel’s discussion around the theme ‘Transcending Dualism: Neither Monastic nor Secular as a Way through the Troubled World’, chaired by Takami Inoue. Panelists and their paper titles were: Michael Conway “Throwing Open the Gates of the Pure Land: Tao-cho’s Recognition of the Latter Days of the Dharma as the Foundation for neither Monastic nor Secular”; Makoto Ichiraku “The Name “Foolish, Stubble-headed One””; Takeshi Kaku “The Path of the Sages Has Fallen Out of Use Long Ago: Neither Monastic nor Secular as a Method for Questioning the Disciples of the Buddha”; and Yasushi Kigoshi “The Position of the “Study of Praxis” in Shin Buddhist Doctrinal Studies”.

### **Session Five – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 9 to 10.30am**

Charles Prebish chaired the fifth session, during which four papers were presented. Presenters and the titles of their papers were: Michael Christopher (Mindful Living Group) “Buddhism and the Science of Enlightenment and Pathology”; Dorothy Sutton (Ohio State University) “Amida Crossing the Pacific: Shin Buddhism in Hawaii”; Jerry Bolick (Brisbane, California) “Conversations With a Buddhist Friend, Ground Level Ministry in North America”; and Patti Nakai (Buddhist Temple of Chicago) “Ondogyo: A Seeker Like Us”.

### **Session Six – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 9 to 10.30am**

The sixth session, chaired by James Dobbins, featured four papers. Presenters and paper titles were: Esho Shimazu (Ryukoku University) “Spontaneous Three Actions Issue in the Sangowakuran Debate”; Chao-ti Wu (Chin Min Institute of Technology, Taiwan) “The Thought of Daochuo in Pure Land Buddhism”; Galen Amstutz (Ryukoku University) “Can We Learn Something from the Omi”; and Angela Andrade (Hompa Honganji, Brasil) “Away from duality - Shinran’s comprehensive path”.

### **Session Seven – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 11am to 12.30pm**

The seventh session offered the Jodo-Shu Research Institute Panel’s perspectives upon the theme ‘The Pure Land Experience of Ojo and Honen’s Instructions for Death: Ancient Myth or Reality?’. Panelists and the titles of their respective papers were: Jonathan Watts “Dissolving Karmic Cancer: Practicing the Pali Teachings in the Modern World”; Clyde Whitworth “On Death and Dying: Practical Applications of Honen’s Dharma among Convert American Buddhists”; Yoshiharu Tomatsu “The classical teachings of Honen’s Pure Land Buddhism and the present day reality of Buddhist spiritual practice in Japanese society”; and Mark Blum “Never Die Alone: Images of deathbed experiences in Heian and Kamakura Pure Land Materials”.

### **Session Eight – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 11am to 12.30pm**

Kenneth Tanaka chaired the eighth session, during which four papers were presented. Presenters and the titles of their papers were: Masaya Shimizu (Musashino University Graduate School) “How I have read King Ajatasatru’s Emancipation”; Makoto Honda (Ryukoku University) “The Ecological Perspectives on Holiness: What connects Buddhism and ecology?”; Hoyu Ishida (University of Shiga Prefecture) “Amida and the Time-Space Interformation in the Here and Now”; and Hisako Narasaki (Ryukoku University) “Lotus Roots in Muddy Waters: A Survey and Analysis of Five BCA Temples”.

### **Session Nine – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2 to 3.30pm**

Four papers were delivered during the ninth session. Presenters and their paper titles were: Takami Inoue (Otani University) “The Significance of the “One-Practice Samadhi” in Early Pure Land

Buddhism”; Nobuo Nomura (Kyoto Women’s University) “ “Neither Monk nor Layman” Religious Life and Secular World”; Eisho Nasu (Institute of Buddhist Studies) “Either a Monk or One in Worldly Life: Brief Notes on Seikaku Hoin (1167-1235) and His Family”; and Mitsuya Dake (Ryukoku University) “The Path of Neither Monk nor Layperson”.

### **Session Ten – Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2 to 3.30pm**

The tenth session consisted of a panel discussion both convened and chaired by Kenneth Tanaka. The theme of that discussion was ‘Our Conceptions and Portrayals of Amida in the Contemporary World’. Panelists and the titles of their presented papers were: Tomoyasu Naito (Ryukoku University) “Expressing Amida Buddha in the Contemporary World”; Lisa Grumbach (Institute of Buddhist Studies) “Frankenstein’s Monster and the Modern Amida: Monster Theory, Buddhist Modernism, and Conceptions of Amida Buddha”; Daniel Frederick (Kyoto University of Foreign Studies) “Amida Buddha as Other”; Carl Becker (Kyoto University) “Our Conceptions and Portrayals of Amida in the Contemporary World”; and Kenneth Tanaka (Musashino University) “Amida as the Life-Giving Force of Creative Nature: A Call to Expanding the Amida Paradigm”.

Upon conclusion of the final two conference sessions, a general meeting of the gathered IASBS membership was convened. Consideration was then given to matters referred from the lengthy Steering Committee meeting held on Friday evening , and resolutions were passed. One such resolution importantly endorsed the proposal that the next, 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the International Association of Shin [and Pure Land] Buddhist Studies shall be held at the Omiya Campus of Ryukoku University in Kyoto, sometime during the period from late May to June, 2009.

On Saturday evening, a fine Conference Banquet was held in the Ballroom of the MacEwan Student Center, bringing all the delegates together one last time and affording a further splendid opportunity to socialize with friends and colleagues; a final opportunity for those not going on the optional excursion to Banff the following day.

### **Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup>**

Approximately 40 of the conference delegates also participated in this day trip by coach up to the resort town of Banff in the Rocky Mountains west of Calgary. The famous mountain scenery was, of course, magnificent and our buffet lunch at Banff Springs Hotel was excellent. Above and beyond these boons though, it was the cherished chance to spend more ‘quality time’ in each other’s company that gave the outing its greatest value. All too soon it was over and we sadly said our farewells, hoping to all meet again for another memorable conference the year after next.



Excursion to the famous Banff on August 5th. From left to right: Shogo Watanabe (Toyo University), Kenneth Tanaka (Musashino University), Esho Shimazu (Ryukoku University), Carl Becker (Kyoto University) and Akiko Ochiai (Tohoku University).

### **Items Approved by the IASBS Steering Committee and Confirmed at the General Meeting**

- A. By-laws change Proposal (Please below for detail.)
- B. Japan District to contribute ¥1,000,000 (approx. \$8,333) to IASBS to meet its objectives and needs for special projects.
- C. Pure Land Journal: A pdf version of the journal will be posted on the IASBS website to anyone interested one year after the printed version has been distributed to IASBS members.
- D. The 2008 budget was approved. (Please below for detail.)
- E. Next IASBS Conference in 2009 will be held at Ryukoku University in Kyoto. The dates will be announced shortly.
- F. The journal and the newsletter will accept “In memoriam” for any deceased IASBS member in good standing, provided that it is submitted by the district of the deceased member.

- G. A Membership Directory will be compiled on the IASBS website. Its access will be limited to IASBS members by use of a password. The details will be worked out by Headquarters.
- H. A pamphlet to explain the IASBS is to be produced.
- I. It was suggested that tables be set up at the conferences for members to share their publications.

The main changes approved to the By-Laws are:

1. Added "Pure Land Buddhist studies" as part of the aim of IASBS.
2. Increased the membership fee scale. (It has not been raised for more than 20 years).
3. Membership fees will now be calculated for 1 year, not for 2 years.
4. Limit was set for term of office for the Officers and Steering Committee members: 2 terms or 8 years.
5. Fiscal year changed from May 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> .
6. Addition of (i) Treasurer and (ii) Membership Coordinator as District-level Officers.



**BY-LAWS OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
SHIN BUDDHIST STUDIES**

(Changes and additions approved on August 4, 2007 are noted in red or underlined)

1. Association Name and Aim: This Association, named the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS), has as its aim the development of international Shin and Pure Land Buddhist studies (*old*: Shin Buddhist studies), and the facilitation of exchange among its members.

2. Headquarters: The headquarters of the Association shall be located at:

c/o Department of Shinshu-gaku

Ryukoku University

Shichijo, Omiya

Shimokyo-ku, Kyoto

JAPAN 600-8268

3. Activities: This Association shall engage in such scholarly activities as holding conferences, research meetings, and seminars; publication of both scholarly and general materials, including books, pamphlets, and newsletters; and other activities deemed appropriate by the steering committee.

4. Membership: Membership is open to those interested in the aim of the Association. (*old*: nothing stipulated) This Association shall be composed of the following members:

(1) Regular members, who are entitled to participate in conferences and other Association activities, to read papers (as a rule, in English) and join discussions at these activities, and to contribute articles to Association publications.

(2) Student members, who have the same privileges as regular members.

(3) Supporting members. These are individuals or organizations who, sympathetic to the purposes of this Association, wish to give financial assistance. They have the same privileges as regular members.

(4) Life members, who, through the payment of the life membership fee, have the privileges of lifelong regular membership.

5. Membership Benefits: Association members shall receive without charge The Pure Land: Journal of Pure Land Buddhism and regular Association publications, newsletters, and notices. Special Association publications will be available at a charge.

6. Membership Fees: Membership fees shall be for a period of one year (*old*: two), and shall be paid at the beginning of the fiscal period as follows:

In Japan

Other than Japan

(1) Regular: ¥3000 for 1 yr (*old*: ¥5000 2 yrs) \$20 for 1 yr (*old*: \$30 for 2yrs)

(2) Student: ¥2000 for 1 yr (*old*: ¥3000 for 2 yrs) \$15 for 1 yr (*old*: \$15 for 2 yrs)

(First year: no charge for students)

(3) Supporting: ¥10000 or more per year (\$60 or more per year)

(4) Life membership ¥100000 (\$600)

Members residing in Japan shall pay fees in Japanese yen to their district treasurer (*old*: Association headquarters); other members shall pay fees to the appropriate district office. Each district is normally required to remit to the Association headquarters 90% of the collected fee for each of its regular members and 100% of its student members. (*old*: nothing stipulated.)

7. Membership Withdrawal: Membership shall be withdrawn under the following conditions:

- (1) When a member submits his or her resignation;
- (2) When so determined by the district (*old*: local) steering committee.

8. Officers: The Association shall have the following officers:

- (1) President (one).
- (2) Vice-President (one).
- (3) Executive Secretary (one).
- (4) Treasurer (one).
- (5) Advisors (unspecified number).
- (6) Steering committee members (unspecified number).
- (7) Auditors (two).

9. President: The President shall represent the Association and direct its activities. The term of office shall be four years; the limit is not more than 2 terms (or 8 years), except under extraordinary circumstances (*old*: serving for two or more terms is permissible).

10. Vice-President: The Vice-President shall assist the President in the latter's performance of duties. The term of office shall be four years; the limit is not more than 2 terms (or 8 years), except under extraordinary circumstances (*old*: serving for two or more terms is permissible).

11. Executive Secretary: The executive secretary shall administer the operations and activities of the Association. The term of office shall be four years; the limit is not more than 2 terms (or 8 years), except under extraordinary circumstances (*old*: serving for two or more terms is permissible). The executive secretary shall be selected by a simple majority vote of the steering committee. He or she shall be assisted in the Association headquarters by an unspecified number of secretarial assistants.

12. Steering Committee: The steering committee members shall select the Association officers and directly participate in the operation of the Association. The term of office shall be four years; the limit is not more than 2 terms (or 8 years), except under extraordinary circumstances (*old*: serving for two or more terms is permissible).

13. Advisors: The advisors shall give advice concerning the Association operations.

14. District Offices: The Association may establish district offices. It is recommended that activities and operation of each district shall be carried out by the District Representative, Treasurer and Membership Coordinator in close consultation with members of the steering committee members of their district. (*old*: chairperson) maintaining communication with the Association headquarters.

15. Income: Operating funds for the Association shall be drawn from membership fees, contributions, and other sources. The Association encourages donations and contributions from members and non-members. (*old*: nothing stipulated.)

16. Fiscal Period: The fiscal period for this Association shall run from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> (*old*: May 1 to April 30 of the following year.)

17. By-Laws: The by-laws of this Association may be amended by a simple majority vote of the steering committee.

18. Dissolution: The Association may be dissolved by a simple majority vote of the officers on a motion presented by at least one-fourth of the members of the steering committee.

19. Assets: In the case of dissolution of the Association, the remaining Association assets shall, upon the determination of the steering committee by a simple majority vote, be contributed to a research organization that has aims in agreement with this Association.

Supplementary Provisions:

1. These by-laws shall go into effect on 1 May 1982.

2. Amended on August 10, 1987.

3. Amended on January 1, 1989.

4. Amended on September 10, 1991.

5. Amended on August 23, 1995

6. Amended on August 3, 2001

7. The lines in red (or underlined) were amended on August 3, 2007

## Special Support Fund from Japan District to IASBS

**¥1,000,000 (approx. \$8,333)**

Some of the projects and programs to be considered with the approved funds are: a) improvement in the quality and the upkeep capability of the IASBS website; b) strengthen efforts to increase membership by publishing membership information packets and publicity in academic journal and websites; c) scholarship to young scholars in the form of essay contest prizes, travel and/or registration grants to IASBS conferences, etc.; d) compilation of *IASBS Directory* to instill among our members a greater sense of belonging to an academic association and; e) supporting district-level conferences and meetings, etc.

### 2008 Budget Proposal (1 January 1 to 31 December 2008)

Calculated at the exchange rate of \$1.00 = ¥120

Revenue: \$6645.83 (¥797,500)

1. Membership fees:

A. Japan District members: ¥2,700/each X 175 members = ¥472,500

B. Non-Japan Dist. Members: ¥1,800/each X 125 members = ¥225,000

2. Donations: ¥100,000

Total Expenditure: \$6645.83 (¥797,500)

1. Journal (annual)

printing, postage, editing \$3,500 (¥420,000)

2. Newsletters (twice)

materials, postage \$600 (¥72,000)

3. Biennial conference support

\$500 (¥60,000)

4. Headquarters Office: supplies,

Website expenses, student staff

(answering mail, website update,

newsletter, exchange rate fee, etc.) \$2,045 (¥245,500)

5. Contingency

NIL