

Shin Buddhist Song Lyrics Sung in the United States: Their History and Expressed Buddhist Images (2) 1936~2001

Keiko Wells

A Search for Bilingual Services, 1936-1948: Becoming Independent from Japan's Political Influence

The first Japanese service book which included English gathas (the term “gatha” is used for the first time in this book) was published in Canada in 1936. It is 『加奈陀日曜学校聖典・讚佛歌』 (*Kanada Nichiyō Gakko Seiten • Sanbutsuka*), *The Buddhist Sutras, Buddhist Sunday School in Canada*.¹⁾ This book is an exact copy of Japanese service book except with an extra attachment of five English songs for children and three short English ceremonial sayings. The five songs and ceremonial sayings are both taken from the *Vade Mecum*, but the songs are called “gathas” not “hymns.” The English translation of the title, *The Buddhist Sutras*, clearly shows that Japanese Buddhist practice used to be simply sutra chanting. There are fifty-one Japanese gathas (讚仏歌, *sanbutsuka*) printed in this book.

In the same year, 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*, *Shin Buddhist Texts*) was published in Japan. This is a peculiar book, because before the sutra texts four literary works addressed to Japanese people by Meiji, Taisho and Showa Tenno, and the seventeen teachings by 聖徳太子 (Shotokutaishi, [Prince Shotoku]) are printed. The works are 教育ニ關スル勅語 (*Kyoiku ni kansuru chokugo*), 戊申詔書 (*Boshin shosho*), 国民精神作興ニ關スル詔書 (*Kokumin seishin sakuko ni kansuru shosho*), 今上陛下御即位式勅語 (*Kinjoheika gosokuishiki chokugo*), and 聖徳太子十七條憲法 (*Shotokutaishi jushichijo kenpo*). This section of 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*) mirrors the political situation in Japan in the 1930's. Japan had started the war with China in 1931, and until 1945, when Japan was defeated in World War II, the country was under the rule of military people. During this period, the government required all the schools to make children memorize and say 教育勅語 (*Kyoiku chokugo*, the educational edict by Meiji Tenno) repeatedly to strengthen the nationalistic admiration toward Tenno. By making people believe that the words of Tenno were most sacred of all, the military-ruled government tried to reinforce the unity of the people. Tenno as a living deity and Japan a sacred country of Tenno was the controlling slogan. The arrangement of the contents of 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*) mirrors the fact that the Buddhist organization in Japan followed this political and military line. At least, Japanese Buddhism did not confront the leading ideology, maybe with some individual exceptions.

Buddhism has co-existed and been quite mingled with Japanese folk religions such as the

¹⁾ The English title here is from the text.

belief in kami (or kamis) in the life of ordinary people. Even after Haibutsu Kishaku Movement (the anti-Buddhist movement started in 1868 by the act to separate Shintoism from Buddhism in order to clarify Shintoism as the religion of the nation), Buddhist rituals and Shintoism or folk religious rituals co-existed in the lives of people. In the postscript of 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*), Honku Uno writes that the 『聖典』 (*Seiten*, 1912) needed much revision to meet the changing times:

〔聖典の〕編纂の方法、集輯の技巧に至っては、逐次進歩改竄せらる可き可能性が含まれるのであって、廣く時代の趨勢に応じ、深く人身の動向を察し、依用よろしきを得むることは、一派布教の衝にあるものの暫くも忘失してならないところであらう。・・・専ら實踐本位に編纂集成したことは、本聖典の一つの特徴である。²⁾

The editing discipline and the skill of collecting texts [into a service book] can be renovated according to the change in the currents of our time. We, who are dedicated to spread the teaching of a Buddhist sect, must not fail to have insight in people's needs and be ready to offer.... One of the noted purposes of this service book is to be practical.

The American Buddhists, on the other hand, were relatively free from the political current in Japan. We see this in their service book. 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*) was reprinted as 『禮拜聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*, Buddhist Service Book and Texts) specifically for the use of the temples in the United States in 1938, and all the four Tenno literatures and the teachings of Prince Shotoku were eliminated. (Shotokutaishi protected Buddhism as a religion of the nation, and Shinran-shonin had a great respect in Shotokutaishi, but the "Seventeen Teachings" is not a Buddhist text.) Another difference between 『禮拜聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*) and 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*) is that 『禮拜聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*) has thirty English gathas taken from the *Vade Mecum*. The postscript by Uno translated above is also omitted. The title 『禮拜聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*), changed from 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*), implies that Buddhists of other sects do not have to be excluded.

In the following year, 1939, the complete Buddhist service book for the use of temples in the United States and Hawaii was compiled. In his "Introduction" Nishu Utsuki writes:

It has been a long-felt desire to have a body of good, worthy hymns and services adaptable to the particular conditions of the Buddhist missions in Hawaii and the American Continent. To meet the demand, various organizations concerned in the mission work have published numerous books, large and small, each of which rendered as good a service as expected. Among those published hitherto one that stands out is the *Vade Mecum* edited under the leadership of Bhikshu Shinkaku of Honolulu.³⁾

²⁾ 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*) (1936), 349.

This service book has a title in two languages, 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services: Japanese and English*. The gathas are printed at the beginning of the contents. They are categorized in four groups and numbered: for services (No. 101~126), for young people (No. 201~220), for children (No. 301~322) and English gathas (No. 501~557). The book has a black hard cover, which reminds us of the Bible. The five characteristics of this service book are: 1) the large number of songs with Western music contained, 2) the songs that have numbers as Christian hymns do, 3) the Bible-looking binding, 4) the English service adapted from the *Vade Mecum*, and 5) the minimum number of Buddhist texts reading and chanting in Japanese. This set of characteristics illustrates that a new Buddhist culture tradition in America had already started. Utsuki states that the Compilation Committee accepted the *Vade Mecum* service style more than they wished because it was already prevalent among young Buddhists.

The English services were also taken from the *Vade Mecum*. Some alterations and some new forms were inserted here to make them more suitable to the present-day circumstances of the oversea missions. It is hoped that the original writers will recognize the changes with generosity. When viewed from the standpoint of the Japanese Buddhism, more changes seem to be necessary; but the original forms were mostly kept unchanged, for the Committee agreed in the view that it is rather difficult to change the already prevalent forms among the younger American Buddhists.⁴⁾

It is worth noting that about the time when the military power started controlling Buddhist textbooks in the peak of Imperial Japan, the Buddhists in America had the first bilingual service book, 『禮拝聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*). They avoided the Japanese political influence. Two years before the Pacific War, they had their own complete service book, 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services: Japanese and English*, which was no longer an adaptation of a Japanese service book. The tradition of Shin Buddhism in America was established at this time.

In 1948 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services* was revised and published as *Young Buddhist Companion*. This book does not have a Japanese title. The Japanese songs in this book are printed with English letters (romanized). Some Japanese songs, which are written in archaic style, and the songs with little reference to Buddhism are omitted. It has an educational chapter, "General Outline of Buddhism," to help the American-born Buddhists to understand the religion. The service is also reorganized to soften the Christian format from the *Vade Mecum*. *The Young Buddhist Companion* became the long-lived BCA service book in the post-war period. This is a book that is edited freely, taking the agree-

³⁾ "Introduction," 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services: Japanese and English* (1939).

⁴⁾ "Introduction," 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services*.

able parts from both Japanese service books and the *Vade Mecum*.

Buddhist Children's Songs in English, 1949- :

A Struggle to Transmit Buddhist Feeling to the Future in English Language

"We just needed new English songs for Buddhist children. They couldn't read Japanese and didn't understand Japanese," said Jane Imamura, when I visited her in August 2001. She was the leader in BCA's Music Department, organized in 1950. During the 1950's and 60's music activities flourished in BCA temples. Imamura composed new songs, directed choirs, and made efforts to make audio records of Buddhist gathas. A paragraph from her autobiography, *Kaikyo*, reflects the lively and energetic activities of BCA people who created the new field of Buddhist culture, that is Buddhist songs in English with the feeling of Japanese Buddhism, at this time:

[Also,] an active choir, formed in 1947, took part in many functions, showing a growing interest in music in our Buddhist communities. Dormitory residents such as Kimi Yonemura, Ricky Ito and Hiroshi Kashiwagi wrote poems for new children's gathas (Buddhist songs). Gathas are composed, printed and recorded. George Teraoka drove all the way from Fowler [to Berkeley], his car loaded with heavy recording equipment, to record our children and adult choirs in "Mako Goes to Sunday School," a collection of these new gathas. Not only in Berkeley, but everywhere, choirs were springing up. Indeed, as encouraged in the text *Kyogyoshinsho*, "Listen to the Dharma and express joy!," everyone responded. The Western Young Buddhist League conferences attended by more than a thousand young adults included in its program a Choir Festival in which nine choirs participated. Fellow bomoris [wives of ministers] Yumi Hojo, Chizu Iwanaga, and I became the Music Department of the BCA with Revs. T. Tsuji, K. Fujinaga, E. Nekoda, and my husband acting as advisors.⁵⁾

Imamura was a leading figure in the movement described above, and the "English gathas for Children," which have been widely sung in Sunday Schools until the present time, would not have been created without her. She volunteered all the work. It is impressive how a wife of Buddhist minister sacrificed her time and pleasure, and offered her artistic talent for the sake of helping people and communicating Buddhist teachings to the public. When I mentioned this feeling of mine during the interview with Imamura in 2001, she only smiled. It was difficult to hear about Imamura's achievement from herself. She talked about the hard work of other people, but not of her own. The virtue of giving oneself to a noble deed without expecting a praise or acknowledgement was a great source of creative energy in the late 40's and 50's.

As mentioned in the above quotation from *Kaikyo*, Jane Imamura, Chizuko Iwanaga and

⁵⁾ Jane Michiko Imamura, *Kaikyo* 開教: *Opening the Dharma* (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center Press, 1998), 34.

Yumi Hojo were the main composers of Children's English gathas created in 1949. Imamura invited Kimi Yonemura Hisatsune to write lyrics. Hisatsune was studying philosophy at University of California, Berkeley, while residing in the temple dormitory that Imamura was taking care of as a wife of a minister.⁶⁾ Imamura, Iwanaga, and Hojo are the second generation Japanese Americans (nisei), and all had education in music and were wives of Buddhist ministers. They conducted choirs in temples from the early 40's and the Buddhist choir now is a tradition in some BCA temples. Their energetic activities as musicians, vigorous and tolerant service to whoever needed their help, and pride as Americans attached with deep reverence to Japanese cultural heritages are, indeed, worth preserving in history. When I saw Imamura for an interview, I asked her what kind of songs they wanted to make. She said,

白人がハワイで書いた曲はみんな、キリスト教の感じがするのですね。それで、minister の wife が三人集まって、みんな music major でしたから、みんなで作ったんです。English の gatha で、静かなのを。いきりたつようなのはやめてね。キリストは、立って、上向いて死んだんですよ。垂直なのね、向きが。それで、Christian の歌は、いきりたつような…。でも、仏教は静かですね。お釈迦様は横になって、年とるまで生きて、亡くなられたでしょ。水平ですよ。仏教は、神様が上にいるキリスト教とは違います。仏教は少し lazy ですよ。(笑) 寝ちゃってね。私も、このごろは、もうあまりお参りしませんよ。(笑) でも、お寺はないとね。聴聞は大切だと教えられていますから。⁷⁾

All the songs that the Caucasians wrote in Hawaii have Christian feeling. So, three wives of ministers got together, all of us music majors, and we made songs. Quiet gathas in English. We avoided the stirring and dashing tone. Jesus died in the upright position, looking upward. Vertical in direction. The Christian songs, you see, are dashing. But, Buddhism is quiet. Gautama Buddha died lying flat. Horizontal. And he lived to be very old. Buddhism is different from Christianity, because Christian God stays above people. You see, Buddhism is a bit lazy. (laugh to herself) Lying down, and relaxing. I don't go to the temple often to practice any more. (laugh to herself again) But there must be temples. I have learned that listening to Buddhist teachings is important. [English translation mine]

As Imamura pointed out, the horizontal viewpoint, a taste for serene quietness, and relaxing attitude toward life and death are characteristics of Japanese Buddhist songs. The new songs for children reflect this tradition.

Buddhist Sunday School Gathas, first published in 1949 and in print until 1966, contains thirty-seven children's songs in English. Over twenty songs were either newly composed or

⁶⁾ Jane Imamura's husband, Kanmo Imamura, had been the minister at Berkeley temple from 1941-58.

⁷⁾ From an interview with Jane Imamura at her home in Berkeley, on August 19th, 2001.

arranged by Imamura, Iwanaga and Hojo. Hojo and Hisatsune wrote most of the new lyrics. The songs were for young children of kindergarten age. The poems of the new songs recreate traditional Buddhist images in English. One can see the influence of Japanese school songs, too, but these songs are not English copies of Japanese songs. What is striking about them is that they express tremendous joy and relaxed positive view of life. The poems communicate messages straightforwardly. There is much less fuzziness (expression of atmospheres) in imagery, but none borrows Christian metaphors such as war images and the sun that exists above people. Though the songs sometimes use the translations of Buddhist terms found in the *Vade Mecum*, such as "Lord" for Buddha, good pieces certainly overcome the handicap of expressing Buddhism in English language.

"Lord Buddha is With Me" written by Yumi Hojo is an example. The message is apparent: Buddha is a part of a child and the child is unconditionally happy. The second line repeats in each stanza.

"Lord Buddha is With Me" (Yumi Hojo)
 Happy, happy, happy! When at play I'm happy.
 Happy, happy, happy! For Lord Buddha is with me.

Happy, happy, happy! When at work I'm happy.

Happy, happy, happy! When at school I'm happy.

Happy, happy, happy! When at church I'm happy. (No. 613)

Hojo's songs are very simple, and the simplicity and the overjoyed tone mirror very young children who just started understanding spiritual joy that comes from appreciation. Another song by Hojo, "Thank you, Buddha," teaches children to appreciate whatever they have, in other words, to accept all the given conditions positively.

"Thank you, Buddha," (Yumi Hojo)
 Thank you, Buddha, for my little toys,
 'Cause they're such fun for little boys and girls.

Thank you, Buddha, for my mother true,
 She cheers me so, when I am sad and blue.

Thank you, Buddha, for my father dear.
 He's oh! So strong! He never sheds a tear.
 Thank you, Buddha, I come to your shrine.
 Each day, each night, I'll gassho⁸⁾ rain or shine. (No. 617)

There are Japanese Buddhist children's songs that express unconditional joy, and, in fact, Hojo told me that she wanted to translate the feeling of happiness that she learned from Japanese Buddhist children's songs into English.⁹⁾ However, no Japanese song is as simple and straightforward as Hojo's songs. Please compare her songs with the following song by Koshu Ezaki. The third and fourth lines repeat in each stanza.

「成道會の歌」		“Jodo-ye no Uta”
師走の八日は お釈迦さま		shiwasu no youka wa oshakasama
仏になられた 成道會 成道會		hotoke ni narareta jodo-ye jodo-ye
蓮華の子供よ はねはね踊れ		rengeno kodomo yo hanehane odore
蓮華の子供よ はねはね踊れ		rengeno kodomo yo hanehane odore
枯れ木も花が あれあれ花が		kareki mo hana ga are are hana ga
五色に咲いて きらきらときらきらと		goshiki ni saite kirakirato kirakirato
小鳥も歌え 大人も踊れ		kotori mo utae otona mo odore
天地もひびけ 成道會 成道會 (No. 122)		tenchi mo hibike jodo-ye jodo-ye

(Trans. by Nobuo Miyaji)¹⁰⁾

December 8th is Jodo-ye, the day Shakamuni became the Buddha.

Children of the Lotus, dance, jump for joy! (×2)

Flowers on withered trees, multicolored, brilliant flowers, suddenly bloomed.

Birds sang and adults dance, heaven and earth resounded, Jodo-ye, Jodo-ye.

This beautiful piece by Ezaki expresses a kind of ecstasy on the special occasion, and the poet emphasizes the unusualness by such miraculous things as that flowers suddenly bloom on withered trees, and that “heaven and earth resounded.” On the other hand, Hojo presents joy as what stays with children in their ordinary state of mind, not as something special.

The new English songs for the *Buddhist Sunday School Gathas* translated the association of Buddha with parents, which is a typical Japanese understanding of Buddha. This tradition is not included in the songs of the *Vade Mecum*. Buddha and parents are associated in the sense of unconditional compassion accompanied by no connotation of dominant paternal power (usually with no gender implication, but sometimes with motherly tenderness). The following song

⁸⁾ “Gassho” means to put the hands together. It's a gesture to show one's will to take refuge in Buddha. In Japan, gassho is often a gesture of showing one's gratitude or petition without Buddhist connotation.

⁹⁾ From an interview with Yumi Hojo at her home in San Jose, on November 9th, 2001.

¹⁰⁾ Translations of lyrics by Nobuo Miyaji are in *Senshin Buddhist Temple* (2001).

conveys the feeling of protection one receives from one's parents.

“It's Raining.” (Kimi Hisatsune)

It's raining and raining outside today, but it's so nice inside.

The ground is too wet for us to play, but indoors we keep very warm.

People may trick us and be very mean, but we must keep in mind,

To Buddha's great love we can always lean, and so keep hearts very warm. (No. 607)

This feeling of security parallels with that which is expressed in the next Japanese song. Buddha here is the first compared with the mother.

「仏さま」(山田 静)

のんのののさま仏さま
わたしの好きな母さまの
お胸のようにやんわりと
だかれてみたい仏さま

“Hotoke sama”

nonno nono sama hotoke sama
watashi no sukina kaasama no
omune no youni yanwari to
dakarete mitai hotoke sama

のんのののさま仏さま
わたしの好きな父さまの
おててのようにつかりと
すがつてみたい仏さま

nonno nono sama hotoke sama
watashi no suki na tousama no
otete no youni shikkari to
sugatte mitai hotoke sama (No. 301)

(Trans. by Nobuo Miyaji)

I wish to be embraced by the Buddha,
just like when I play, held to my mother's breast.

I wish to rely upon the Buddha,
just like when my father firmly holds my hand.

Daisetz Suzuki explains the association of Amida Buddha with parents as follows:

[Second,] we believe in Amida Buddha as our *Oya-sama*, or *Oya-san*, as it is sometimes called. It is the term used to express love and compassion. *Oya* means parent, but not either parent, rather both mother and father; not separate personalities, but both fatherly and motherly qualities united in one personality. The honorific *san* is the familiar form of *sama*. The latter, *Oya-sama*, is the standard form. In Christianity, God is addressed as the Father — “Our Father who art in Heaven” — but *Oya-sama* is not in Heaven, nor is *Oya-sama* Father. It is incorrect to say “he” or “she,” for no gender distinction is found. I don't like to say “it,” so I don't know what to say. *Oya-sama* is a unique word, deeply

endearing and at the same time rich with religious significance and warmth.¹¹⁾

Japanese Buddhist songs often sing of *Oya-sama*. In order to convey the double meaning by one word, in some songs the Chinese characters 御仏 (佛), which literally means Buddha in honorific and is generally pronounced “mi-hotoke,” are indicated by the poet to pronounce “mi-o-ya,” which literally means “parent” in honorific. This kind of device is common in Japanese literature. I quote one waka (traditional Japanese verse with thirty-one syllables) as an example. This waka by Jinko Otani is sung at temples with music.

(大谷 紘子)

安かりし今日の一日を喜びて yasukarishi kyono hitohi wo yorokobite
御佛みおふのまえにぬかづきまつる (No. 106) mioya no mae ni nukazukimatsuru

(Trans. by Kimi Hisatsune)

Rejoicing in this peaceful day,
I bow before the Buddha in gratitude. [Buddha: parent: Oya-sama]

“Oya-sama” is certainly the concept that the poets for the *Vade Mecum* did not recreate in their songs. This concept is mixed with Confucian esthetics, and was not appealing to the Caucasian poets.

The crucial difference between the new English songs and the songs from the *Vade Mecum* is that the poets of the *Vade Mecum* borrowed Christian imagery and enriched the poems with the Christian hymn tradition more often than taking Japanese Buddhist imagery in. On the other hand, Hisatsune and Hojo eliminated the tradition. This can be clearly seen in the usage of the words such as “the sun” and “love.” The Japanese American songs use the same words, but, instead of using Christian connotation, either bring in Japanese traditional Buddhist imagery or create new imagery to go with the words. A lovely piece by Hisatsune, “Sunbeams,” is the best example. Here, children are the sunbeams, parts of the sun. The image of sunbeams probably comes from the Japanese Buddhist art that gives forms to Amida Buddha with numerous light spokes around the body. The third and fourth lines repeat in each stanza.

“Sunbeams” (Kimi Hisatsune)

We are little sunbeams spreading joy and cheer.
We rise up early every morn and please our mother dear.
We are little sunbeams, we are little sunbeams,
We are little sunbeams, we're happy as can be.

¹¹⁾ D. T. Suzuki, revised by Taitetsu Unno, *Buddha of Infinite Light* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1997), 25.

We are little sunbeams spreading Buddha's love.

We keep from saying hurtful things'n please our Lord above. (No. 609)

She uses the terms as "love" and "our Lord above," which can be easily mistaken that they convey Christian concept; however, if one reads the poem without being bothered with the Christian idea of paternal almighty God, "our Lord above" (the sun) is only another name for (Amida) Buddha's compassion. Moreover, children are sunbeams (parts of the sun which reach the world of life), hence they are "spreading Buddha's love." The way they spread "Buddha's love" is very simple: they get up early and please their mothers; that is, they live healthily in harmony with others. Hisatsune's "Sunbeams" can be understood as a modification of BCA's group reading text, "Golden Chain," for very young children.

"Golden Chain"

I am a link in Lord Buddha's golden chain of love that stretches around the world. I must keep my link bright and strong. I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself. I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, to say pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful deeds, knowing that on what I do now depends my happiness and misery. May every link in Lord Buddha's golden chain of love become bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.¹²⁾

It is true, though, the use of words with Christian connotation is problematic. Hisatsune wrote a song titled "Buddha Loves You," and the song was criticized in later years as "a copy-cat version of 'Jesus Loves Me.'"¹³⁾ Before I introduce Hisatsune's lucid account about the Buddhist concept expressed in her song, I quote the song below.

"Buddha Loves You" (Kimi Hisatsune)

Fly, fly, little bird, Buddha loves you little bird.
Tweet, tweet, tweet tweet tweet tweet, Tweet.

Run, run, little pup, Buddha loves you little pup
Bow, wow, bow wow wow wow, Wow. (No. 601)

¹²⁾ *Shin Buddhist Service Book* (1994), 15.

¹³⁾ Kimi Hisatsune, "Perspectives" in *Wheel of Dharma* (September 1987). The first paragraph of this article reads:

"Fly, fly, little bird, Buddha loves you" goes a Buddhist gatha for children. Non-Buddhist critics as well as a few misguided Buddhists view this song as a copy-cat version of "Jesus Loves Me". Non-Buddhists can be excused for the misunderstanding, because they may not possess any real knowledge of Buddhist concepts, but when our own colleagues suggest that the gatha should be discarded because of its Christian taint, we need to reveal the significant difference underlying the little song, "Buddha Loves You."

The song goes on to number four with “pussy cat” and “little fish.” The poet does not specify the speaker, so the voice can be that of the child, or Buddha, or just anything. Hisatsune argues in her article, “Perspectives,” the difference between Christianity and Buddhism that underlies the two children’s songs:

The Christian song merely reminds a child that, according to the Bible, “Jesus loves me.” It is centered on the child, who in his or her loneliness or frustration may want to look up to a kind, warmhearted intermediary who will save suffering souls from their miseries and make it right with God.... The Buddhist song leads one away from an ego-centered concern, or a need for someone to ease one’s pain, to a concern for all other living beings — the bird, the puppy, the cat, and the fish as well. Of course, the song includes only the beings familiar to children, but parents and teachers can expand the children’s understanding to include all of life in the entire universe. They can explain that the Amida Buddha symbolizes Universal Compassion and Wisdom — the Totality — of which we are all a part. Not only human beings, but everything that exists is basically interrelated.¹⁴⁾

“To Church We Go” by Hojo also expresses the same idea.

“To Church We Go” (Yumi Hojo)

I have a dog, he says Bow-wow. He jumps at a frog, and barks Bow-wow.
But when to church he follows me, he’s good, he’s good, as sweet as can be.

He loves to wait, he’s never bored. He listens to songs about our Lord.
Yes, when to church he follows me, he’s good, he’s good, and happy as can be.

Lord Buddha says that even he is his very own like you and me.

So when to church we go each week, Lord Buddha’s thoughts we both will seek. We both will seek! (No. 606)

This song may remind the listeners “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” but the message of this Buddhist song is that the pet of the child is equally a part of Amida Buddha “like you and me.” The dog is able to “listen,” while Mary’s little lamb is subordinate to her and is not going to school to learn the same things as Mary.

The criticism of songs that use words having Christian connotation discloses the difficulty of transplanting a cultural heritage in a different linguistic environment. Because words are a living stimulus that quite often draws out the listener’s collective sentiments, social and cultural values in the minds of listeners even before they communicate the speaker’s message,

¹⁴⁾ Hisatsune, “Perspectives.”

misunderstanding or complete absence of understanding is almost inevitable. When people sing songs, they do not pause to think what the series of words really mean. They can hardly imagine that they misunderstand the message expressed in such simple and easy songs for children. They only “feel” the message and believe their feeling is “right.” For most of the Buddhists in the United States in the 1980’s, either Japanese Americans or non-Japanese Americans, Japanese sentiment was no longer a part of their native culture. It was something new to learn. On the other hand, they could sharply “feel” the Christian connotation in English words, thus they were very sensitive about the “smell” of Christianity in certain words. This transition of collective sentiments from nisei to the later generations may be the reason that “Buddha Loves You” was perceived to be an imitation of a Christian song. Nisei people such as Hisatsune and Hojo have well-balanced understanding of Japanese tradition and American tradition. This rare balance made it possible for them to create uniquely Buddhist songs in English. Their aim was to pass the value and emotion of Buddhist culture to the coming generations.

A new version of BCA service book, the *Buddhist Service Book* was published in 1963. The *Young Buddhist Companion* (1948) was the forerunner of the *Buddhist Service Book*. The “Preface” suggests that they mainly needed a revision in the gatha selection.

[However,] the gradual maturity of Buddhism in America has necessitated the revision of the book [*Young Buddhist Companion*] to meet the needs of the present day Buddhists.

In this volume the text for the services has remained generally unchanged but the gatha section has been thoroughly revised. This section has now been divided into three parts --- general service, solo, and choir. Many new Japanese gathas and English gathas recently written and composed in America have been added.¹⁵⁾

The activities and creations by Jane Imamura, Chizuko Iwanaga, Yumi Hojo and Kimi Hisatsune made this service book possible.

New English Songs, 1990-:

Cultural Diversity in Shin Buddhist Temples Today

In 1989 the Ad-Hoc Music Committee investigated how to increase interest in Buddhist music. The Committee advertised for original gathas for the purpose of renewing the gatha selections for a BCA service book. The service book had not been revised since the *Buddhist Service Book* of 1963.¹⁶⁾ Among the song artists who responded to this advertisement, Linda

¹⁵⁾ “Preface,” *Buddhist Service Book* (1963), 3.

¹⁶⁾ There was no great revision in the Buddhist Service Books for twenty-one years, but 1968 version lists the gathas in alphabetical order of the titles, whereas 1963 version lists them in numerical order. The gatha numbers were established when 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services* was published in 1939. New songs replaced a few songs; they took up the numbers of the discarded songs. The new English songs written after 1939 had new song numbers.

Castro was the leading figure. She made six songs and the Committee chose two for the *Shin Buddhist Service Book* (1994).

Linda Castro was born in a Caucasian Catholic family and is trained as a musician. Being a wife to a Caucasian Buddhist minister, Donald Castro, she instinctively and intellectually grasped the beautiful parts of Japanese Buddhist imagery, and revived the tradition in the sketch from her observations. “A Special Place” is an example.

“A Special Place” (Linda Castro)

There is a square upon the floor, an island in a sea,
 a place I visit every week, a spot that’s just for me.
 When I sit upon that square I leave my cares outside.
 All anger is forgotten, the Dharma is my guide.
 There is a special something here, it’s something you can see,
 for kindness lives within this place, it lives inside of me.

Amida stands inside the shrine, a smile upon his face,
 I smile right back, I’m glad to be here in this special place.
 Now there’s time to sit and think of all that I can do,
 to care for those around me, each day the whole week through.
 This is a home to gentle thoughts when sitting quietly,
 for kindness lives within this place, it lives inside of me.¹⁷⁾

This poem describes the “special” feeling one gets from being in the Buddhist temple for Sunday Service or Sunday School. It is a feeling of peace, protection and compassion. It is “special” because the world outside is full of “cares.” Here she is highlighting the joy of religious practice in our ordinary life.

Castro uses two sets of metaphors to express the distinction of outside and inside in order to emphasize the “special” feeling. First she lets the speaker of the poem sit on “a square” (a Japanese cushion) on the floor. The “square” is metaphorically a solitary “island in a sea.” The “sea” can be the sea of worldly desires and cares, which is expressed in one of Shinran’s four line verses.

生死の苦海ほとりなし	shouji no kukai hotorinashi
ひさしくしずめるわれらをば	hisashiku shizumeru warerawoba
弥陀弘誓のふねのみぞ	midaguzei no fune nomizo
のせてかならずわたしける	nosete kanarazu watashi keru

There is no shore around the sea of suffering, the world of life and death

¹⁷⁾ Copyrighted by Linda Castro, 1990. *Six Songs for Buddhist Children: Teachers’ Book* (1990), 3-5.

We have been drowning in the sea for long, but
 Amida's Vow is the only boat, which
 Will surely carry us to [the shore/ enlightenment/ Nirvana/ another world]

Furthermore, the special feeling he/she gets is concealed "inside of" the speaker. So the "special" feeling is first guarded in the sitting space (mat/ island) of the speaker, and is further internalized spiritually. In the second stanza, the feeling is released toward outside. The point of view goes out from the space "within" the mind of the speaker, and moves to the shrine. Then Amida's presence is perceived. Amida distinguishes the space in the temple from the world outside, and makes the temple a "special place." Once the speaker establishes communication with Amida through smiles, he/she is ready to go outside of the temple again "to care for those around me, each day the whole week through." This can be understood as an expression of a process of enlightenment. It may have been a momentary experience that happened while "sitting quietly"; however, Castro in this poem makes the listener understand clearly how easily and naturally a religious appreciation can take place.

The two-direction movement of one's attention, one going inward to look deeply into oneself, and the other going outward to let one's self go free, are the dominant characteristic in Castro's songs. In "The Bodhi Tree,"¹⁸⁾ Castro presents a particular tree, writing "this tree from a faraway country." But later she identifies the tree with Dharma (teachings of Buddha). Here, Dharma is the universal tree that stands in the center of the world, deeply rooted on earth. The boughs cover over the world and the "leaves in the shape of a tear" fall like blessing rain and "touch all living things the whole world 'round."

"The Bodhi Tree" (Linda Castro)

This tree from a faraway country, with leaves in the shape of a tear,
 likes heat and lots of sunshine and doesn't grow very well up here.
 But the Dharma's not like a tree, it can grow anywhere on the earth at all.
 Like a shower of rain bringing life again to a dry and thirsty ground,
 The Dharma touches all living things the whole world 'round.
 You may live in a very large city, or in a village up in mountains above,
 You may speak Chinese, English or Pali,
 but we can all speak the language of love.
 For the Dharma's not like a tree, it can grow anywhere on the earth at all.
 Like a shower of rain bringing life again to a dry and thirsty ground,
 The Dharma touches all living things the whole world 'round.¹⁹⁾

¹⁸⁾ It is said that Gautama was enlightened under a Bodhi tree.

¹⁹⁾ Copyrighted by Castro, 1990. *Six Songs for Buddhist Children*, 9-11. Footnoted: from the Dharma School play, "The Bodhi Tree lesson" by Janet Takahashi and Linda Castro. Castro told me that she had taken the image of rain for this poem from 法華經 (*Hokekyo*).

Another song by Castro, "A Flower Grows" also starts from a feeling of concealed oneness; here, again, the feeling shifts to the feeling of "opening up" toward the world outside in joy and happiness. The beginning of the poem reads,

From a tiny seed a flower grows, it stretches up and looks for the sun.
This flower opens and shares its beauty and sweetness with everyone.²⁰⁾

The recognition of oneness, and special but solitary feeling of oneself about being in a Buddhist temple is, I assume, a generally shared feeling of Buddhists in America. Regardless of their ethnic identity, they are outside of mainstream Christian culture. The feeling of opening up oneself and becoming one with the outside world through the power of compassion ("kindness," "beauty," "sweetness" in Castro's expressions) has been the everlasting theme in Buddhist songs since the beginning. What is unique and valuable about her gathas is that she universalized the feeling of being "the other" by finding counterparts. The "Bodhi tree" is one. Ganjin is another.

"Ganjin's Journey" deals with the Chinese priest Ganjin (688-763) who came to Japan in 754 in response to the petition of Japanese envoys who wished to take a learned Chinese Buddhist priest who could spread proper Buddhist teachings to Japan. It took twelve years before he succeeded in crossing the sea to reach Japan, and the hardships of six incredible attempts cost Ganjin his eyesight. Castro put the story of Ganjin into a lyric, not a ballad, expressing the joy of communion. The greater the difference in space and time is, the more remarkable the accomplishment of joining.

Like the sun breaking through a gray and misty canopy,
our voices join, break the silence, grateful to our past.
He who traveled over oceans planting seeds of Truth,
facing dangers overwhelming with no thought of self.
We are joined by the Dharma in a circle without end.

Foreign lands, does it matter? Foreign tongues may speak the same thought,
children all of one mother, now in need of care.
As we gather draw together, know all life is one,
Stand beneath the same cool moonlight, warmed beneath one sun.
We are joined by the Dharma in a circle without end.²¹⁾

"Ganjin" is a traditional Buddhist figure, but a new motif in Buddhist gathas. Castro's exceptional sensibility as a Caucasian is revealed in observing Ganjin as a foreigner coming to Japan.

²⁰⁾ Copyrighted by Castro, 1990. *Six Songs for Buddhist Children*, 13.

²¹⁾ Copyrighted by Castro, 1990. *Six Songs for Buddhist Children*, 16-17.

Hard traveling and overcoming adversities for the sake of Buddhist Truth is another traditional Buddhist theme, but this again is a new motif in gathas. The sun and the moon have been important images in songs and literature, but have seldom been expressed sensuously as “cool” and “warm” in gathas. The creative mixture of these traditional and new images makes this song outstanding.

In his “Address” for the Centennial Opening Eitaikyo-Muen Hoyo Service at Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Church held on November 10th, 2001, Donald Castro, the minister of the Seattle Betsuin, indicated that the first generation Japanese (issei) Buddhists can be equally compared with Ganjin, because they traveled from Japan to America and implanted Buddhism in spite of numerous hardships including the anti-Japanese movement of the early 20th century and the relocation camp experience during World War II. I believe that non-Japanese American people can also be identified with Ganjin for being originally a foreigner to the Buddhists and Japanese cultural heritage. Probably because “Ganjin’s Journey” expresses the joy of different elements getting together in harmony to accomplish oneness, it is well loved by the people of new generations. It was selected to be included in the 1994 BCA service book.

Looking into the Core of Japanese Culture, 1969-2001: Japanese American Identity and Songs

The latest version of the *Shin Buddhist Service Book* (1994) illustrates that the new generation Buddhists are remote from Buddhist culture and that they have to learn the tradition. This service book no longer has a black hard cover that reminds us of the Christian Bible. Its cover is purple (a noble color in Japan) and the pattern of 九条下がり藤²²⁾ (Kujo Sagarifuji, Kujo-pendant-wisteria or Wisteria crest) is printed in gold. It contains Buddhist chantings in Japanese letters with hiragana readings along the side of kanji characters, English translations of the texts and tone and pitch scripts for chanting. The Japanese gathas are provided with English translations of the song texts. The gatha numbers are omitted, and the number of gathas is reduced to: English gathas 18, Japanese gathas 19, Special Service gathas (Japanese) 10, Organ Music 4, Choral Music 7 (English 2, Japanese 5). There are explanatory pages of Shin Buddhist history, manners, and traditions. The adaptation of Christian church service procedures is eliminated.

Besides the official BCA service book, each temple has freedom to make its own. The Senshin Buddhist Temple has been publishing and revising its own version since 1991. The latest book, *Senshin Buddhist Temple* (not called “service book”), was published in April 2001. It has much more detailed explanations of the traditions and manners of the Jodoshinshu Hongwanji-ha (Nishi Hongwanji) sect. The major part of the book is Buddhist texts such as sutras, traditional gathas (not songs with western music) and others. The texts are presented in Japanese but written in English alphabet. This book also includes original Japanese texts. The

²²⁾ The pendant wisteria crest is the official crest of Hongwanjiha or Nishihongwanji branch of Jodoshinshu Buddhism.

texts are presented with chanting notations and English translations. *Senshin Buddhist Temple* is the only source I found that explicitly explains the difference between the traditional Buddhist gathas and new gathas.

In Sanskrit, *Gathas* are poems, songs, or hymns found in the sutras. In the Chinese translations, they have a set number of characters per line which, when chanted, give it a set meter. Other *gathas*, called “*Kada*” (伽陀) in Japanese, are composed pieces with a set melody. Since the mid 1800’s the term *gatha* was also used to refer to songs composed in western style and sung, much in the manner of Christian hymns.²³⁾

The editor, major writer for the explanatory pages, and translator of sutras for this book is Masao Kodani. He is the minister of the Senshin Temple. His personality and the deep understanding and knowledge of Buddhism seem to draw people to his temple. Sunday morning at the Senshin Temple is very lively. People of all ages fill up the main room of the temple; they practice and listen to Kodani’s words. They nod, smile, think, laugh aloud, nod again and whisper to each other of whatever they have thought from listening to Kodani. They look happy and satisfied, even children are not bored. It appeared to me that Kodani instinctively knows how to bind the minds of people together into one; in other words, he knows how to make them feel that they have the same identity while in the temple. The cultural activities that take place in the Senshin Temple are diverse and full of vitality. Kodani has not created gathas, but he has revived and enlivened other forms of Japanese performance arts, and that, too, attracts the people to him. His creative activities that I am going to introduce below are consistent with his understanding of “oneness” in Buddhism: individual elements can stay as they are, yet they can get together and become one. This idea is explicitly expressed in the following statement about chanting:

Chanting is the sound of enlightenment. It’s the voice. If you listen to the chanting, there is no pitch. Everyone who chants, chants in his own pitch. They don’t copy the person next to them. There are layers of sound. So, the chanting is very thick. It’s like a train. You can’t stop it. Huge moving sound. But if you listen to it carefully, it’s made out of individual voices. Each individual voice is distinct. If you do that, there is no bad chanter. So, chanting really is the vocal expression of oneness. Buddhist oneness means individuals “as is.” Nobody agrees. But all together —. Chanting expresses it vocally. ... When you understand that oneness, then you start creating gathas in your own language. Songs are partly intellectual experience, because you understand the meaning of the words. But chanting isn’t. You don’t activate your mind, but let it forget about itself.²⁴⁾

²³⁾ *Senshin Buddhist Temple*, 78.

²⁴⁾ From an interview with Masao Kodani at the Senshin Buddhist Temple on October 8th, 2001.

Kodani has practiced Gagaku, Japanese court music from the eighth and ninth centuries, for over thirty years. There is an enthusiastic group practicing Gagaku now at the Senshin Temple. He says Gagaku is the real traditional music of Japanese Buddhism. It is the oldest orchestral music in Japan and was popular when Buddhism flourished in Japan. It used to be drinking party background music in court before samurai (warriors) came into power; therefore it is very relaxed, yet elegant. Musicians are clothed in loose garments and sit cross-legged on the floor. This casualness and relaxed atmosphere is approachable for sansei and later generations of Japanese Americans. Above all, in Gagaku playing, each instrument is distinct. None of the instruments is accompaniment. It has open rhythms. There are four beats and the space between beats can stretch as musicians like. The musicians listen to the "breath rhythm" of each other and play. This recognition of distinctiveness of individual instruments and feeling of oneness through physical practice is Buddhistic.

In August 2001, the Gagaku group of the Senshin Temple went to a Navaho Native American Reservation and had a Gagaku and Bugaku (the dance part of Gagaku) performance. It was not a performance to show, but was a ritual performance. Kodani explains the initial intention of this:

I was doing some translation of the history of Gagaku and Bugaku. And I came across this passage; in early Nara court the court musicians and dancers on the daybreak of the New Year would play and dance, with no audience. And the purpose of it was, they were trying to tune themselves up with the universe for the coming year. And that idea always stuck in our group's mind: "We should do this, ONCE." And the question became, if we do this, where would it be. And we all agreed in the South West.²⁵³

The group took all the Gagaku stage setting, costumes and masks on trucks and set the stage in the middle of the wild where there were no roads. It was a spectacular place in Canyon de Chelly in Arizona, called Moth Cave. It is the most sacred spot for the Navajo tribe. A Navajo medicine man did the Harai (a ritual ceremony to purify the space). The group had supernatural experiences there.

It was really a spiritual experience for all of us in many ways. But strange things happened. Defy logic. It's hard to explain. We didn't question it, (laugh), okay, whatever (laugh). We drove into this place Tuesday morning at five o'clock to set up. So some of us went Monday morning to check to make sure when the sun rose, because the camera was going to be shooting into the sun. So we wanted to make sure we were through before the sun came up. We stayed there and the sun came up at 9:20. The following morning, at the exact same spot, we were playing, the camera was shooting, and the sun came up at 8:45. That's NOT possible, right? We were STUNNED. Five minutes earlier,

²⁵³ From the interview with Kodani.

maybe, but not thirty minutes earlier. But it came up thirty-five minutes earlier. So I asked the medicine man, Daniel, “Do you realize the sun came up thirty-five minutes earlier than yesterday morning?” And he said, “Oh, yea, it happens every once in a while.” It didn’t bother him at all! (big laugh)²⁶⁾

Other Buddhist practices through physical performance that Kodani has enhanced are Taiko (Japanese drumming) and Bon Odori (Bon dance). In 1968 his church member found a big Japanese drum stored in the temple. He took it out and a group of people started drumming in their own way, and they kept hitting for four hours. Since then Taiko became a part of cultural activity taken place in the temple. Kodani taught Taiko workshops in other temples, and eventually Taiko became very popular in North America. Now there are numerous Taiko classes all over in the United States and Canada apart from Buddhist temples. The vigorous movement of drumming and the powerful sound of big Taikos let one leave one’s self-consciousness. Thus this can be a way of Buddhist practice.

Bon dance, too, is a physical Buddhist practice to forget one’s ego and become one with others. The Buddhist origins of Bon can be traced to the *Ulambana Sutra*²⁷⁾; however, it has acquired new meanings being tied with Japanese folk religion. In Japan Bon is generally believed to be the period when ancestors come and visit this world. People make horses and cows using cucumbers and eggplants and set them at the entrance of each house, facing the house. They leave the front door open at sunset and make smoke behind the vegetable horses and cows, so that the ancestors can come into the house riding on the cattle and the smoke. At the end of Bon period, the vegetable cattle are set to face outwards, and smoke is sent from behind, that is, smoke goes outward from the house entrance. The ancestors would go back riding on the animals and the smoke. So this is a family gathering period, and community people dance together at night. In contrast to significance of Bon as folk culture in Japan, Bon dance at American Shin Buddhist temples has significance as religious rite. According to Kodani, Shin Buddhism does not believe in the soul, so Shin Buddhists in Japan do not participate in the Bon dance. On the other hand, Shin Buddhists in America dance so as to practice religion. Kodani explains:

In Japan, outdoor dancing called Bon Odori was added to the Obon observance and “welcome” and “sending off” lanterns or lights in various forms were lit for the spirits of one’s ancestors. *Jodoshinshu* again does not look upon Obon as the time when the “souls” of one’s ancestors return, and that the services, offerings, dancing, lights, etc. are for the benefit of one’s dead relatives. It is rather a time to remember and honor all those who have passed on before us. It is to appreciate all that they have done for us and to recognize

²⁶⁾ From the interview with Kodani.

²⁷⁾ The origin of Obon and the custom of food offerings is explained in, Masao Kodani and Russell Hamada, *Traditions of Jodoshinshu Hongwanji-ha* (Los Angeles: Pureland Publications, 1995), 39.

the continuation of the influence of their deeds upon our lives. Obon is a time for self-reflection — an important Buddhist practice, for it is only when man becomes aware of his imperfections and insufficiency in contrast to his ideals that religion becomes a matter of personal concern.

Obon is also called the Gathering of Joy by Jodoshinshu Buddhists. It is not the happiness of getting what you desire, but the joy of being shown the Truth of what one is, no matter how damning that truth is to the image of our ego-self. It is the joy of the awareness of being embraced in the Truth, in Amida Buddha, in Namoamidabutsu. Bon Odori too is not a dance of happiness, but rather a Dance of Joy.²⁸⁾

Many people who come to dance do not know the meaning of Bon Odori explained above, but it does not matter at all. Kodani says they dance in the “peasants’ way” in America: no dressing up, no sophisticated style, and no showing off, but “just dance.” The meaning of Bon dance in America is expressed in the following dance song that Kodani created with Nobuko Miyamoto. The title, “yuiyo” (唯踊) means “just dance.”

Yuiyo Bon Odori (Nobuko Miyamoto and Masao Kodani)

Ureshii kai? Kanashii kai? Kekko, Kekko, Odore, Odore!

Namoamidabutsu, tada odore

Are you happy? Are you sad? Wonderful, it's all right, dance, dance!

Namoamidabutsu, just dance!

1. Sunset... / Sky turning indigo / Moon and stars begin their evening dance
Circle in the sky / Voice of wind - Yuiyo / Rhythm of trees - Yuiyo
You can feel it if you dance / Just Dance
Anno Mamma - Yuiyo / Sonno Mamma - Yuiyo
Konno Mamma - Yuiyo / Tada odore
Like that over there - just dance / Like that - just dance
Like this - just dance / Just dance
2. Obon ... / Gathering of Joy / Joy in remembering the past /
In embracing the sorrow / Close your eyes - Yuiyo / Let it go - Yuiyo
From your Kokoro (From your whole being) / Just dance
3. Isshoni ... (all together) / Moving as one / Forget the self and join in celebration
Why look at life go by? / Don't be shy - No Hazukashii / Don't make a show - No Shibai
Let your Kokoro / Just dance²⁹⁾

²⁸⁾ Kodani and Hamada, *Traditions of Jodoshinshu Hongwanji-ha*, 40.

²⁹⁾ Senshin Buddhist Temple, *Gathering of Joy: A History of Bon Odori in Mainland America* (Los Angeles: Senshin Buddhist Temple, 1999), 36.

On the day of Bon Odori, many non-Buddhists participate. They are welcome to do so because the significance of Bon Odori is “to become one” with others and the universe.

What makes Kodani’s cultural and religious activity so powerful? One thing is his firm identity as a Japanese American. He skims up the essential part of Japanese culture and implants it among people and himself. The other thing is his tolerance of various split conditions. He accepts himself culturally as an American and a Japanese without denying either, and eventually puts the two identities together to create a strong identity (not just as a name of the ethnic group) as a Japanese American. He translates the difficult Buddhist sutras and teachings into very intellectually active English; at the same time, he values, appreciates, and participates the “peasants’ way” of religious practice with the same enthusiasm.

I once asked him why he thinks that people, including non-Japanese Americans, “feel right” to be Buddhists at the Senshin Temple. He answered that it might be because they didn’t have to resolve everything intellectually in their lives if they were Buddhists. Traditionally in Japan, one understands things with “kokoro.” “Kokoro” is mind (intelligence) and heart (emotion) in one, and it is said to exist “about an inch below one’s belly button,” where one’s center of gravity is. Only intellectual understanding or only emotional acceptance is not enough. One has to correspond with the world through one’s “kokoro,” the total being of oneself. Thus, a Buddhist can endure contradictory situations.³⁰⁾ The creative cultural activities at the Senshin Buddhist Temple are the tangible outpourings of united “kokoro” power.

Conclusion

The history of Buddhist songs in the United States and the Buddhist images expressed in the songs reveal a consistent attitude of Buddhists; that is, they try to put different elements together without clashing or one conquering the other. The first odd element they had to deal with was the vast European culture. They adapted the Sunday School system and western style music to Japanese language Buddhist services. Then, in Hawaii, they sought a way to universalize Buddhism, using Christianity as a religious service model. When people in the United States realized that this model only halfway satisfied them, they added Japanese songs to the service. When American culture and English language became natural to the life of Buddhists in America, they created songs that expressed Japanese sentiment in English. Half a century after World War II, the Buddhists in new generations are trying to bring their foreignness into Japanese Buddhist cultural heritage and make them into one through creative activities. They also look through the Japanese culture to grasp what they think is most valuable. Throughout these sincere struggles, they noticed the differences and similarities and adopted what was the best for them. Shin Buddhism in the United States follows the same teachings as in Japan; however, its culture is unique. It sustains diversity in people, society, and language. It outlives the changes in current thoughts. Its sentiment is Japanese, but its dynamic energy is American.

³⁰⁾ From an interview with Masao Kodani at the Senshin Buddhist Temple, on December 9, 2001.

The folksong does not belong to “high culture”; however, because it reflects the taste and feeling of the people, it illustrates what people do consistently in various situations. Japanese American Buddhist songs certainly show the cultural behavior pattern of the Buddhists in the United States. And the pattern, that is, to seek for oneness through one’s total being without destroying individual elements in the universe, is appealing for all of us who live in this time of globalization.

Buddhist Service Books, Sunday School Books, Gatha Books Cited

1903. Saima, Takuwo, ed. 『通俗仏教唱歌集 第壹編』 (*Tsuuzoku Bukkyo Shouka Shu*, Buddhist Song Book for People, vol. 1). Hiroshima: Senshin Shobo. 32nd pt., 1937.
1912. Shimizu, Seiichiro, ed. 『聖典』 (*Seiten*, Sacred Texts). Kyoto: Kokyo Shoin. 2nd pt., 1918.
1923. Kokyo Shoin Henshubu, Shimizu, Seiichiro eds. 『聖典・米国仏教会禮拜用』 (*Seiten*, Sacred Texts for the Use of the Buddhist Temples in the United States) Kyoto: Kokyo Shoin. 4th pt. of 『聖典』 (*Seiten*).
1924. Hunt, E. H., ed. *Vade Mecum, A Book Containing an Order of Ceremonies for Use in Buddhist Temples*. Hilo, Hawaii: The Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Mission. 2nd and 3rd pts., Honolulu: 1926 and 1927.
1925. Kotani, Tokusui, ed. 『らいさん』 (*Raisan*, Praise). Kyoto: Kyokyo Shoin, Hozokan, Higashibayashi Shobo. 2nd and 3rd pts., 1927 and 1928.
1936. Abe, Daigo ed. 『眞宗聖典』 (*Shinshu Seiten*, Shin Buddhist Texts). Kokyo: Kyoto Shoin Shinshu Seiten Fukyukai.
1936. Nishimoto, Takunen ed. 『加奈陀日曜学校聖典・讃佛歌』 (*Kanada Nichiyō Gakko Seiten • Sanbutuka*) *The Buddhist Sutras, Buddhist Sunday School in Canada*. Kyoto: Kokyo Shoin.
1938. Hongwanji Hokubei Kaikyo Honbu, ed. 『禮拜聖典』 (*Raihai Seiten*, Buddhist Service Book). San Francisco: Hongwanji Hokubei Kaikyo Honbu. 2nd pt., 1939.
1939. Fujii, Kiyomizu, et. al. eds. 『和英標準佛教讃歌勤式集』 *Standard Buddhist Gathas and Services: Japanese and English*. Kyoto: Publication Bureau of Buddhist Books, Honpa Hongwanji.
1948. The Buddhist Churches of America. *Young Buddhist Companion*. San Francisco: Commission of Buddhist Research and Publication. 3rd pt., 1954.
1949. The Buddhist Churches of America, Sunday School Department. *Buddhist Sunday School Gathas*. (No publisher record).
1963. The Buddhist Churches of America, Bureau of Buddhist Education. *Buddhist Service Book*. San Francisco: (No publisher record).
1972. Departments of Sunday School of Buddhist Churches of America and Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. *Buddhist Services and Gathas for Children*. (No publisher record).
1981. Dharma School Department, Buddhist Churches of America. *Dhama School Service Book*.

- (No publisher record). 5th pt., 1994.
1990. Castro, Linda. *Six Songs For Buddhist Children*. San Francisco: Buddhist Churches of America.
1991. Senshin Buddhist Temple. *Jodoshinshu Hongwanji-ha Raisanseiten*. (No publisher record). 2th pt., 1993; 3rd pt., 1995.
1994. Buddhist Churches of America, Department of Buddhist Education, rev. and ed. *Shin Buddhist Service Book*. San Francisco: (No publisher record).
2001. Senshin Buddhist Temple. *Senshin Buddhist Temple*. (No publisher record).

アメリカ生まれの讃仏歌： 新仏教文化の誕生と行方（2）

〈Summary〉

ウェルズ 恵子

アメリカに浄土真宗本願寺派の団体が組織されたのは1898年、ハワイに寺ができたのはそれより早い1894年であった。以来現在に至るまで、「アメリカにおける浄土真宗はどうあるべきか」という模索が続いている。この模索と文化的推移を最もよく表しているのが、讃仏歌の変化である。北米教団は、日本語と英語をあわせて200以上の歌を持つ。拙論は、宗教歌はフォークソング（民謡）の一種であるという立場から、それらの歌の創作と取捨選択の過程を辿り、各時代の日系アメリカ人の理想と感性の特質を指摘する。

太平洋戦争直前から現在までを扱う第二部では、まず1)バイリンガルな礼拝と、日英両語の讃仏歌が歌われた時代、2)日系二世の創作による児童用英語讃仏歌、を分析して、仏教をアメリカ人の生活に受け入れやすくする努力が熱心になされたことを指摘、考察する。キリスト教文化を基盤にするアメリカ文化や英語の文脈の中で、日系信者がどういう工夫をして自分の宗教観を表現したか、よりどころとなった感性の基盤は何かを論じる。1970年代まで(1)(2)の動きは活発だったが、60年代の後半から徐々に異なる動きが起きてくる。そこで最後に、3)白人信者による新しい英語讃仏歌、4)日本文化にアイデンティティーの表現を求めた日系三世の宗教的表現活動、を扱う。多様化した信者層が自らの宗教とアイデンティティーをどう把握しているかを検討しつつ、新仏教文化の誕生と行方を論じる。