

## Reading the *Kyōgyōshinshō*: Reading the General Preface⑤

### I . Section 3 of the Preface: About the Immediate Source of Our Liberation

#### A) A Look at the translations

**本文：**故に知りぬ。円融至徳の嘉号は悪を転じて徳を成す正智、難信金剛の信樂は、疑いを除き証を獲しむる真理なりと。(『聖典』149頁)

**DTS:** Therefore, be it known that the Auspicious Name embodying the supreme virtue which knows no obstructions is the right transcendental knowledge which transforms evil into merit, and that the faith which is beyond conceivability and as genuine as a vajra is the truth which makes us attain the realization by wiping out every trace of doubt we may have cherished. (p. 42)

**CWS:** We know, therefore, that the auspicious Name embodying the perfectly fulfilled supreme virtues is true wisdom that transforms our evil into virtue, and that the diamondlike shinjin so difficult to accept is true reality that sweeps away doubt and brings us to attainment of enlightenment. (p. 3)

**Inagaki:** Hence, I know clearly that the auspicious Name of the all-complete, supreme virtue is the embodiment of the perfect wisdom that can turn evil into merit and also that joyful faith, indestructible as a diamond but difficult to accept in our hearts, is the truth that removes our doubts and awakens us to enlightenment. (p. 3)

**Yamamoto:** Therefore it is clear to me that the all-pervading virtue of his Holy Name is the right wisdom that turns evil unto virtue and the faith adamant hard to attain is the truth that expels doubt and gives us light. (p. 3)

**試訳：**Therefore we should recognize that the name enriched with supreme, perfected, all-pervading virtues is the true wisdom that transforms evil, making it wondrous spiritual qualities, and that the adamant, hopeful acceptance, difficult to accept, is the true principle which removes doubts and causes us to attain enlightenment.

#### B) Sources for the portion about the name

1) Transformation of evil into compassion in Daochuo's *Anleji* 安樂集

Third, [the Buddha] encouraged his father the king to practice *nianfo samadhi*. His father the king said to the Buddha, ‘The completed virtues of the stage of Buddhahood are True Suchness, actual form, and the primary truth of emptiness. What is the reason that you do not have your disciple practice this?’ The Buddha told his father the king, ‘The completed virtues of the myriad Buddhas have innumerable and deeply wondrous states, supernatural powers, and liberation. Because this is not a state to be practiced by [foolish] ordinary human beings, [I] encourage [you], the father king,

to practice *nianfo samadhi*.’ The father king said to the Buddha, ‘What is the form of the virtues of *nianfo*?’ The Buddha told his father the king, ‘It is as though, in a forest of *eraṇḍa* that is forty *yojana* square, there is one *gośīrṣa-candana*, which, although it has roots and sprouts, has not yet broken forth from the ground. The forest of *eraṇḍa* is only foul smelling, not at all aromatic. If one eats those fruits or flowers, they will go mad and die. At a later time, the roots and sprouts of the *candana* gradually grow and have barely become like a tree. The fine aroma flourishes, and ultimately transforms this forest, completely making everything smell beautiful. Those sentient beings who see this all give rise to a rare mind.’ The Buddha told the father king, ‘For all sentient beings within birth and death, the mind of the *nianfo* is also like this. If one just connects one’s thoughts [to that Buddha], without cease, one will definitely be born before a Buddha. If one attains birth in the Pure Land once, then all the various evils are transformed and become great compassion, in the same way that this fragrant tree changes the forest of *eraṇḍa*.’” In the parable, the forest of *eraṇḍa* stands for the three poisons, the three obstructions, and the limitless grave sins within the bodies of sentient beings. *Candana* represents the mind of the *nianfo* of sentient beings. ‘Have barely become like a tree’ means if all sentient beings simply can pile thought upon thought [of the Buddha] without break, the karmic path [to the Pure Land] is completed.”

From chapter 1, section 4 of the *Anleji*, SSZ 1:381-382

2) Passage in the *Ōjō yōshū* 往生要集 by Genshin 源信

The eighty-four thousand gates of defilement now filling my deluded mind and the eighty-four thousand gates of paramitas that Amida Buddha has fulfilled are originally, empty and quiet, and unobstructed as a single substance. Desire is itself enlightenment. Anger and ignorance are also the same, just in the way that water and ice do not differ in their nature. Therefore, a sutra states, “Passions and *bodhi* do not have two different substances. Birth-and-death and nirvana are not distinct entities.” I still lack the capacity for the fire of wisdom, so I am unable to melt the ice of passions and turn it into the water of virtue.

From chapter 5 of the *Ōjō yōshū*, SSZ 1:840

3) The source for “the enriched name” in the preface to Yuanzhao’s *Guanwuliangshoujing yishou* Just in order to conform to the capacities of beings and particularly save them all equally are there many gates. Some encourage constant practice of mantras; some exclusive adherence to the enriched name; some require strict focus of the mind, while others have one purify oneself and cultivate abstinence. Each accords to the different times and conditions. They are fully laid out in the various scriptures. Only this proper contemplation method [described in the *Contemplation Sutra*] ultimately leads to non-arising.

From the preface of *Guanwuliangshoujing yishou* 觀無量壽經觀經疏 by Yuanzhao (1048–1116)

T no. 1754, 37:279a9-11

4) Another source for “the enriched name” by Yongqin 用欽 quoted in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*

If I now call the enriched name of one Buddha verbally and consider it mentally, then from the cause until reaching the result, there is nothing that will not be endowed with immeasurable virtues.

*Seiten*, p. 187; TK, p. 63

5) Another source about the transformative power of the name by Zhongshi 宗稷 quoted in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*

The *Collection of Passages on the Land of Contentment* states: Zhongshi states, “A single grain of *qiongdan* ● (環一王) 丹 will change iron and make it gold. The single phrase of the true principle will transform evil karma and make it good karma.

*Seiten*, p. 199; TK, p. 80

**C) About “the name enriched with supreme, perfected, all-pervading virtues”**

- 1) About “the enriched name
- 2) About “supreme virtues” (*shitoku* 至徳)
- 3) About “perfected, all pervading” (*enyū* 円融)

**D) About “the true wisdom that transforms evil, making it wondrous spiritual qualities”**

- 1) The name as wisdom
- 2) The transformative power of the insight into the wisdom expressed in *Namu Amida Butsu*
- 3) On transforming evil into virtues

**E) Sources for the portion about the *shinjin***

1) Śākyamuni’s statement about the difficulty of accepting the teachings in the *Larger Sutra*

It is difficult to encounter the appearance of a Tathāgata in the world, and difficult to meet one. It is difficult to obtain the teachings about the enlightenment of the myriad Buddhas and difficult to hear them. Being able to hear the excellent path of the bodhisattvas, the myriad *pāramitās* is also difficult. Encountering a teacher, hearing the Dharma, and being able to practice it is further still difficult. If one hears this sutra, hopefully accepts and upholds it, this is the most difficult among difficulties. There is nothing more difficult than this.

SSZ, 1: 46; *Seiten*, p. 87

2) Tanluan’s statement about the difficulty of accepting the message in the “virtue of sustaining and keeping from ending in vain” in the *Jingtu lunzhu* 淨土論註

For example, it is as with the tree called “great firmness.” It takes one hundred years for this tree to send forth a shoot from the ground, but when it does it grows one hundred yards a day. It thus grows day by day. How can its height after a hundred years be compared to tall pines? Since pine

trees grow no more than an inch a day, people hearing of this ‘great firmness’ tree surely doubt it can grow thus in a single day. Likewise, a person hearing that Śākyamuni Tathagata brought a man to realization of arhatship with but one sermon, or brought another to insight into the nonorigination of all existence before they sat down to breakfast, will take this as words of inducement and not a presentation of fact. Hearing the above exposition of the *Treatise*, one will surely not believe it. Extraordinary words do not find entrance into the ears of the ordinary, since they think it cannot be so. That cannot be helped.

*The Pure Land Writings, Volume 2: Tanluan*, p. 127; SSZ, 1: 333

3) Shandao’s statement about the difficulty of accepting the teachings and relaying them to others  
Encountering a world with a Buddha is extremely difficult. It is difficult for a person to have the wisdom of acceptance. Having the opportunity to hear this rare teaching is further the most difficult thing. Having acceptance oneself and teaching others to accept is even more difficult than these difficulties. Compassion broadly and universally teaching is what truly brings about repaying one’s debt of gratitude to the Buddha.

The version of the *Wangsheng lizan* 往生礼讚 in the second fascicle of *Jizhujing lichanyi* 集諸經礼懺儀, by Zhisheng 智昇

Quoted in the chapter on *shinjin*, *Seiten*, p. 247; TK, p. 148

3) Statements about the difficulty of accepting the teachings by other Chinese Pure Land thinkers quoted in the chapter on *shinjin* (See CWS, p. 109-110)

4) Shandao’s reference to the “adamantine aspiration”

Although the ordained and lay gathered together now, etc., each have given rise to the unsurpassed mind, it is extremely difficult to distain birth-and-death and hard to enjoy the Buddha-dharma. Together let us give rise to the adamant aspiration, unconventionally sever the four streams, overcoming them, aspire to enter into the realm of Amida, put our hands together, make reverence and follow the direction.

5) Shinran’s creative quotation of Shandao’s use of the term “adamantine mind” in the chapter on *shinjin* (See CWS, 1: 106; 2: 262)

6) Hopeful acceptance as the centerpiece of the three minds in the eighteenth vow

When I attain Buddhahood, if there are sentient beings in the ten directions who extend their minds, hopefully accept, and wish to be born in my land even ten times and are not born there, then I will not attain perfect enlightenment. Excepted are those who commit the five grave offenses and slander the right Dharma

#### F) *Shinri* 真理 refers to the true principle, not “truth”

1) The explanation of “*shinri*” by Enjō-in Senmyō 円乘院宣明 (1749-1821)

“*Shinri*” refers to the true principle, that is, the principle that is under discussion. It means the tracts by which something arises.

*Kyōgyōshinshō kōgi shūsei* 教行信証講義集成, 1: 141

2) The explanation of “*shinri*” by Kōgatsu-in Jinrei 香月院深励 (1749-1817)

The true principle is referred to as “*shinri*.” It has the same meaning as when we usually use the word principle, like when we say, what principle made that happen, or what is the principle behind that.

*Kyōgyōshinshō kōgi shūsei* 教行信証講義集成, 1: 153

#### **F) Dispelling uncertainty and leading to enlightenment**

- 1) The definition of 疑 in Buddhism
- 2) The certain that comes from *shinjin*
- 3) The enlightenment that comes from hearing the Name