

Risshō Kōseikai and the Bodhisattva Way Religious Ideals, Conflict, Gender, and Status

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This article concerns conflicts that arise within families associated with Risshō Kōseikai, a Japanese New Religion, as a result of the sect's emphasis on "following the bodhisattva way." It examines the historical background on this issue in the lives of Sākyamuni and Nichiren, and particularly in the life of Niwano Nikkyō, one of the founders of Risshō Kōseikai and (until recently) its president. The problem is then discussed in terms of the daily lives of lay believers by examining personal narratives (taiken). Finally, the issues of family conflict are discussed with reference to the life of Naganuma Myōkō, Niwano's co-founder of Risshō Kōseikai, and specifically with regard to the issue of divorce.

A PERSONAL COMMITMENT to the pursuit of religious goals often requires an extensive investment of time and energy. One might wish to attain enlightenment, reform a sect or religion, establish a lay organization, or simply achieve individual peace and happiness; well-known examples from many of the world religions show that these spiritual endeavors often require one to significantly loosen familial ties or even cut oneself off from friends and family entirely. In the present paper I am particularly interested in how this applies to Buddhism, and more specifically to the Japanese Buddhist-inspired New Religion Risshō Kōseikai 立正佼成会, since this organization provides modern examples of conflict generated by religious commitment, and of the ways in which leaders and adherents alike attempt to justify such commitment.

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Niwano Nikkyō 庭野日敬 (1906–) and Naganuma Myōkō 長沼妙俊 (1889–1957), the cofounders of Risshō Kōseikai—the second largest New Religion in Japan and one of the most influential groups in the Nichiren 日蓮 stream of Buddhism—are of particular interest not only because of the size of the organization they founded, but also because of the amount of detailed information available on their lives (Niwano, for example, has left a detailed autobiography that discusses, among other things, the problems the two encountered during the formative years of the group). By looking at their relations with their families during the early period of the group’s history and comparing their experiences with those of a typical lay believer we can observe not only the potential for conflict embedded in religious ideology but also its relation to gender and status.

My concern in this essay is with the conflicts that arise within Risshō Kōseikai families as a result of the sect’s emphasis on “following the bodhisattva way” (one of the three major concepts of Mahāyāna Buddhism that Risshō Kōseikai sees imbedded in the *Lotus Sūtra*). Risshō Kōseikai teaches that “the noblest form of Buddhist practice is the way of the bodhisattva, one who devotes himself to attaining enlightenment not only for himself but for all sentient beings” (*RISSHŌ KŌSEIKAI*, ed. n.d., p. 7). It is the interpretation and implementation of this “way” that lies at the heart of our problem. What level of involvement is required of an individual in helping someone else on the path to enlightenment? Can one make a case for abandoning family and friends to achieve this noble goal? How far afield must one cast one’s net when trying to help others? What are the limits of commitment to the bodhisattva way and how does one decide what they are?

Before addressing these questions, however, we need to look at the lives of Śākyamuni and Nichiren, the two figures who laid the intellectual and theological foundations of the tradition from which Risshō Kōseikai emerged. It is their quest for a religious path enabling all beings to overcome suffering that the leaders and adherents of Kōseikai look to for guidance and try to emulate in their own lives.

Śākyamuni and Nichiren

The traditional hero is often confronted with tests and trials on his or her quest for knowledge and power; many times the successful completion of these tasks requires that the hero cut him or herself off from everyday “normal” social interaction and enter a “different” realm of existence (see, e.g., CAMPBELL 1968; RAGLAN 1937; and RANK 1959). This pattern of leaving the “real” world to seek spiritual power

or insight is often seen in the biographies of religious adepts as well (DUNDES 1980). In Japan, the religious life histories of Śākyamuni and Nichiren provide two of the most widely known examples of the quest motif and the rejection of family ties for the sake of spiritual goals.

ŚĀKYAMUNI

The legend of Śākyamuni's great renunciation—his abandonment of family to seek enlightenment—is one of the best-known tales in Asia. Śākyamuni, the prince of a small kingdom south of the Himalayas, was raised in sumptuous splendor in his father's palace and protected from all knowledge of worldly misery. During secret trips from the palace, however, he discovered that suffering, illness, and death are unavoidable aspects of the human condition; this discovery caused him to leave his family and begin the life of a wandering ascetic, searching for the way to overcome human suffering and death. In the biographies of Śākyamuni this abandonment of home and family is often referred to as the "great departure." After years of severe ascetic practices he finally attained enlightenment and became the Buddha.

What is not emphasized in the telling of this tale is the unfilial nature of his departure: by abandoning his family and position he transgressed social norms, having rejected his duties as royal successor and as caretaker of his aged parents, wife, and son. All of these actions were, however, justified—according to the Buddhist worldview—because they were undertaken with the sole intention of attaining enlightenment and helping others.

NICHIREN

In Japan an equally well-known religious life history—and one that parallels Śākyamuni's in important ways—is that of Nichiren. A number of his biographies depict Nichiren as a quite precocious youth who early in life questioned the social hierarchy, asked which sūtra contained the "true" teachings of the Buddha, and wondered which Buddhist sect followed them (ANESAKI 1966; CHRISTENSEN 1981; and KIRIMURA 1980). Since his parents could not satisfy his inquisitive mind, he was taken at the age of eleven to a nearby Buddhist temple to be educated. It was from this time that he severed his ties with his family and began his quest. Nichiren himself characterized his life as one of confrontation, struggle, and suffering. His strong criticisms of the major Buddhist sects and his strident appeals to government officials not to follow their teachings led to his castigation by most religious and secular leaders, numerous attempts on his life, and finally exile. After failing to reform the established sects, he abandoned the world

and spent the last eight years of his life in relative seclusion.

In numerous letters to followers, Nichiren emphasized that he was “living the *Lotus Sūtra*” in his life.¹ What he meant by this expression, he explained, was that he was the person fulfilling the sūtra’s prophecy that in the Latter Days of the Law (*mappō*) a teacher would arise to preach the *Lotus Sūtra* and lead people to enlightenment. The *Lotus Sūtra* states that this person would be a reincarnation of Jōgyō bosatsu 上行菩薩, a status that Nichiren did, in fact, claim for himself on numerous occasions.

Nichiren also perceived numerous parallels between his own life and that of the Buddha—so much so that Masaharu ANESAKI, one of Nichiren’s earliest biographers, commented that Nichiren “had lived a life of sixty years in thoroughgoing conformity to, or emulation of, Buddha’s deeds and work” (1966, p. 133). Nichiren thus provides an early example of what Ernst KRIS and Otto KURZ have called “enacted biography”—the conscious use of a well-known life history, life-style, or text to model one’s own life upon (1979, p. 132).² Founders of Japanese New Religions, especially those who claim to follow the teachings of Nichiren, are now able to turn not only to the life of Śākyamuni as a model for “enactment,” but also to that of Nichiren himself. Niwano Nikkyō and Naganuma Myōkō, the cofounders of Risshō Kōseikai, comprise instructive examples of the use of a religious founder’s behavior to justify one’s own behavior and the domestic conflicts that arise because of one’s own conduct. Ironically, the life events they describe transgress all ordinary social norms and should, according to their own teachings, be avoided at all costs.

The Founding of Risshō Kōseikai

Risshō Kōseikai was formed in 1938 when Niwano Nikkyō and Naganuma Myōkō split off from Reiyūkai 霊友会, taking with them a number of members they themselves had led into the organization.³ Niwano first came into contact with Reiyūkai teachings in August 1934

¹ See, for example, a letter Nichiren wrote just before or after being exiled to Sado in 1271 (THE GOSHO TRANSLATION COMMITTEE 1988, pp. 123–26).

² In this essay we shall see that Niwano makes use of Śākyamuni’s biography and not of Nichiren’s to justify his actions. It might be interesting to speculate on the role of personality in such decisions, and to investigate whether more outspoken “combative” types of founders/leaders in the Nichiren tradition (for example, Kotani Kimi of Reiyūkai and Ikeda Daisaku of Sōka Gakkai) rely more on the biography of Nichiren.

³ Niwano and Naganuma form a pair of a type that ARAI (1972, p. 98) claims is common in the founding of Japanese New Religions: a female shamanistic leader (Naganuma) with a male partner (Niwano) who is in charge of doctrine and organization.

when his second daughter became very ill. He could not afford to hospitalize her, as a doctor had recommended, so he turned to Reiyūkai for help. He interpreted his daughter's rapid improvement as proof of the merit of Reiyūkai teachings and immediately joined the organization. Three months after joining and beginning his study of the *Lotus Sūtra* he claims that "my eyes were open[ed and] courage welled up from the bottom of my heart" (NIWANO 1978, p. 79). He became so dedicated to the group and the spread of its teachings that he began to neglect his family and his pickle-making business. Niwano describes his feelings and actions during this time in the following way:

The spirit of valor that I felt welling up in me would no longer permit me to accept the halfway measure of devoting myself to business and giving only spare time to religious activities. On many days, I neglected my shop and ran about doing religious work. Soon what small savings I had were gone, and I had to resort to pawnshops. I caused my wife a great deal of worry. A very hard-working, ordinary housewife, she lacked my kind of religious faith. It is not surprising that she complained about the way I did things. In spite of the fact that the number of our children was growing and work was very pressing, I often dashed out on what I called missions of aid. Even when at home, I spent most of my time reading the sūtra. In addition, other members of our religious group called frequently; and my wife had to talk to them and treat them kindly, even though I lacked time to sit down and have a quiet discussion with her. It is only to be expected that circumstances of this kind should have caused her to complain. In my heart, I understood. That is why I never fought or complained. Nonetheless, I did not give in, but adhered firmly to my mission as a man of faith. "You're perfectly right," I would tell her. "But I'm an emissary of the Buddha." And with a remark of this kind, I would immediately go out on religious work.

(NIWANO 1978, pp. 79–80)

The conflict between Niwano's family obligations and religious commitment, which evolved from an unconscious to a conscious level of articulation, is reflected linguistically in the passage above in his frequent use of such phrases as "in spite of the fact," "even though," and "nonetheless." Reflecting back on those early days, Niwano realizes that his actions caused his wife much anguish:

Of course, it is easy to laugh about it now. But in those days, I was a source of great irritation to my wife. And the same kind of thing continued steadily for twenty years. Even though it

was in the name of service for others, I realize that I brought her unhappiness and am sorry. (NIWANO 1978, p. 80)

He also realizes the contradictory nature of his actions: in order to obtain the time necessary to spread the teachings he had to neglect his business and ignore his family—behavior that ran counter to the teachings and values he was trying to instill in others.

But in my eagerness to become more familiar with the teachings and to devote myself to guidance work, I neglected business. Though such negligence runs counter to what is expected of a Buddhist layman, I was unable to restrain my burning passion to seek the Truth and to serve others in the compassionate spirit of the bodhisattva. Then I came up with the idea of changing my business to one that would leave me plenty of free time, while giving me an opportunity to meet a great many people. After considering a number of proposals, I decided on a milk shop. (NIWANO 1978, pp. 80–81)

Therefore early in his career Niwano understood that his life-style not only ran counter both to Buddhist teachings and Japanese social norms, but also that it caused his wife great anguish. The problem of how to accommodate his total commitment to the religious group with his existing obligations to his family became a major concern and was not resolved until the late 1950s, after the death of Naganuma Myōkō.

In 1943 one of the first major trials of the fledgling Risshō Kōseikai occurred, one that was directly related to Niwano's domestic situation. On 13 March of that year Niwano and Naganuma were ordered to the local police station, where they were arrested and imprisoned on the charge that Naganuma's "spiritual guidance was confusing people's minds" (NIWANO 1978, p. 116). Niwano was held in jail for two weeks and interrogated about the group's principles of instruction before being released. Naganuma was released one week later. After this incident Niwano discovered that they had been arrested because neighbors, knowing of his wife's unhappiness with his life-style (and in particular his neglect of his family), had passed a petition around the neighborhood asking the police to investigate the group's activities. Discussing his family situation at this time, Niwano explains:

My wife was strongly opposed to my life of religious faith. In the eyes of the world, her disappointment was only natural from the standpoint of a homemaker and the wife of a man who spent all his time helping others. Furthermore, when I gave up the milk shop and dedicated myself entirely to the

Law, our way of life became poorer and more difficult. I received very little money from Kōseikai. We were forced to make frequent trips to the pawnshop, and we all—my wife and I and our five children—lived in one small room on the first floor of the headquarters building. The room was so cramped that at night when we spread our bedding some of the mattresses curled up against the sliding doors, from which they gradually wore away the paper covering. At about that time, my wife had just had another baby and was forced to remain in bed. Before I went out on guidance missions, I would prepare a large pot of rice gruel and put it on a hibachi charcoal brazier set by her bed so that at least the family would not go hungry.

Throughout this period, I was always either out on guidance or other business with Myōkō Sensei or was discussing the Law with her and other members in the headquarters. My wife must not have liked the idea that I spent so much of my time with other women. (NIWANO 1978, pp. 117–18)

Niwano seems aware of his transgressions against the norms of society (“in the eyes of the world,” “from the standpoint of a homemaker”) and against his wife as an individual (“her disappointment was only natural,” “our...life became poorer and more difficult”). But in the final analysis he cannot accept either her viewpoint or her lack of understanding for him, and for the first time in his autobiography compares his position to that of the Buddha:

I felt that I could have understood my wife’s feelings completely if she had been married to an ordinary man. But as the wife of a person dedicated entirely to the Buddha’s Law, her attitude was unpardonable.

The Kōseikai leaders considered my wife an interference in my work, a kind of Devadatta—a cousin of Śākyamuni Buddha who was first his follower and then his enemy, but even then was an important element in the Buddha’s spiritual development. Some of them insisted that I should be separated from my wife; others sympathized with her. I later learned that Myōkō Sensei had felt that the situation was hopeless until she received divine instructions to clear up my domestic affairs.

(NIWANO 1978, p. 118)

These “divine instructions” that Naganuma received were what had led to their joint arrest: she had instructed Niwano that the gods wanted him to separate from his wife and children. In the above-cited passage Niwano juxtaposes his general situation with Śākyamuni’s, but attributes the comparison to the Kōseikai leaders.

The leaders passed strict judgment on me: I was still too much attached to my wife and children and was not yet sufficiently refined spiritually to fulfill the great mission entrusted to me by the gods. I was instructed to live in Myōkō Sensei's house and was watched so that I did not speak to my wife, who had not moved to Nerima but remained in the headquarters. It was while we were living in this way that Myōkō Sensei and I were imprisoned. (NIWANO 1978, p. 119)

Niwano does not represent the renunciation of his family as a personal choice; rather he describes it as something done to him (“the leaders passed strict judgment on me”) and enforced (“I was instructed...and was watched”). Despite the strained situation of their relationship, it was not until August 1944 that Niwano finally separated from his wife and six children, sending them to live with his elder brother in the small farming village of Suganuma 菅沼. He justifies his actions at that time in the following way:

I explained to my wife and children that I was embarking on a severe course of discipline and study of the *Lotus Sūtra* and the writings of Nichiren and that I was sending them to the country, not out of selfishness, but out of a need to help other people. I asked my wife not to worry and to do her best to raise the children well. (NIWANO 1978, p. 139)

Thus began a ten-year period of almost complete isolation from his family, during which Niwano visited the village where they lived only twice.⁴ Niwano tells us that even on these two occasions “I did not speak to any of them. I preserved my vows of separation” (NIWANO 1978, p. 140). And so it appears that the Buddhist and Risshō Kōseikai ideal of compassion can be justifiably ignored if it interferes with the higher good of seeking spiritual awakening and helping others—just as in the case of the Buddha.

The full extent of the pain and humiliation endured by Niwano's wife and children cannot be known, but we do get intimations of the depth of his wife's suffering from published interviews with her and the wife of Niwano's elder brother (NIWANO 1978 pp. 142–43). Niwano suggestively identifies the biography of the Buddha as one of the main sources of anxiety for his wife during this time of separation and hardship :

Apparently the part of my training that upset my wife most was the statement in the *Lotus Sūtra* to the effect that, after ten

⁴ His eldest son, Nichikō, claims that he visited three times (NIWANO 1982, p. 26).

years, the Devadatta (or enemy of the Buddha's teaching) would vanish. My wife interpreted this to mean that she would herself vanish after ten years and became frightened of sudden accidental death or death from serious illness.

(NIWANO 1978, p. 142)

Even after Niwano and his family were reunited after their long separation, their living situation was not that of an average family:

Even after the ten years of separation were ended, we did not return to normal family life. For another three years we were allowed to share the same roof but not as man and wife and father and children. Perhaps this period was more difficult for us than the ten preceding years. (NIWANO 1978, p. 142)

That Niwano's children also suffered is clear from the thoughts he attributes to his youngest daughter, Yoshiko 佳子:

Father [Niwano] is a religious leader who saves other people. But why doesn't he live with us? Why does he inflict hardships on mother? Can religious leaders save the masses if they can't save their own families? (NIWANO 1978, p. 271)

With the lack of dissimulation often characteristic of children, she cuts to the underlying paradox with her final question.

The depth of bitterness and ill feeling towards Niwano at this time is probably most forcefully expressed by his eldest son and successor to the leadership of Kōseikai, Niwano Nichikō 庭野日鑑. In a very candid discussion of his life and relationship with his father in his book *My Father, My Teacher: A Spiritual Journey*, Nichikō discusses his confusion at his family's early life-style and his eventual rebellion against his father. He expresses his feelings at the age of seventeen in the following way:

Unable to understand why, after ten years' separation, mother and father and we children had to lead an abnormal life under the same roof, I gradually grew more irritated. I knew it was futile to ask for an explanation from father or the people around him. The air was charged with their assurance that our condition was inevitable. I did not really ask even myself for a reason. All my days were spent in irresolute, vague awareness that something was wrong. (NIWANO 1982, p. 62)

By the time he reaches his early forties, however, Nichikō has come to understand his father's motives and accept the group's interpretation of them. After mentioning that his mother was "an impulsive person, [which] partly accounts for her reputation [as] the Buddha's wicked,

rebellious cousin Devadatta” (NIWANO 1982, p. 59), he goes on not only to justify his father’s actions but also to highlight the parallels with Śākyamuni:

In the earliest period of Risshō Kosei-kai’s existence we were extremely poor. No doubt mother often showed father by word and deed that she wished he would devote more attention to his family. This is only natural in a wife. But the difficulty is this: such natural behavior is out of place in the home of a religious leader. It is precisely because she behaved in what could be considered a natural wifely fashion that people accused her of hindering father’s religious training. Kosei-kai was destined to become an immense organization. It could not allow the wife of its supervising member to make the kind of demands any ordinary wife is entitled to make.

The world of religion transcends ordinary mortal common sense. The family of a religious leader becomes worthy of its standing by accepting sacrifice and even abandonment. The Buddha left his family, but all of its members attained greater happiness than ordinary domestic establishments can know. His father Suddhodana, his aunt and foster mother Mahā-prajāpatī, his wife Yaśodarā, and his son Rahula all found salvation. I have heard that many officers of Risshō Kosei-kai]made sacrifices in those early days very much as my father did.

(NIWANO 1982, pp. 59–60)⁵

In this passage Nichikō contrasts two gendered worlds, the first one natural (immanent) and female (as indicated in expressions like “natural in a wife,” “natural behavior,” and “natural wifely fashion”), and the second one religious (transcendent) and male (as in the expressions “religion transcends,” “religious leader,” “greater happiness,” and “salvation”). The pivotal concept linking the two worlds is “sacrifice”: by “accepting sacrifice and even abandonment,” the unworthy family members can raise themselves into a state of salvation. An interesting twist occurs in the last sentence, where the person making the sacrifice becomes the father, not the mother/family. Also we are once again told that it was the group that imposed these decisions on their leader, and the comparison with Śākyamuni and his

⁵ Niwano Nikkyō, commenting on his son’s (Nichikō’s) wedding, states that “during the celebration, ‘Prediction of the Destiny of Arhats, Training and Trained,’ chapter nine of the *Lotus Sūtra*, was read. In this chapter, the Buddha predicts the future buddhahood of his own son, Rahula. Rahula was said to be a person who, though enlightened, concealed his blessed state and lived with ordinary people in an ordinary fashion so that he might lead them to enlightenment naturally. This personality is virtually that of my son” (NIWANO 1978, p. 166). This is the closest that Niwano comes to actually equating himself with Śākyamuni.

family is expanded.⁶

One final quotation from Kōseikai literature, in this case a general introduction to the history of Risshō Kōseikai for new members, concisely summarizes and explains the group's ideological stance on their leader's ten-year abandonment of his family:

When he became lonely for his family, a divine revelation would come: "You still cannot separate yourself from your wife and children. What good do you think your attitude will do? The less you worry about them, the stronger will be the protection granted them by the gods." Niwano objected to such revelations, arguing that abandoning his family violated the teachings of the Buddha. He was too modest to understand the leadership mission that had been settled on him. Even though he remained a layman, in order to become a leader he had to undergo the same kind of religious discipline as a priest. (*RISSHŌ KOSEI-KAI* ed. 1982, pp. 16–17)

This text is significant for a number of reasons. First, we see that though Niwano regarded his desertion of his family as a violation of the Buddhist teachings, he felt that it could be justified on the basis of the "leadership mission that was settled on him." This leads to a second point: his leadership role is portrayed as not having been sought, but as having been "settled on him." And third, we are told that "he had to undergo the same kind of religious discipline as a priest." This statement might suggest that it is normal for Nichiren Buddhist priests to leave their families for long periods of time for religious discipline. This is simply not the case. In Nichiren Buddhism the longest and most severe ascetic practice that a priest can submit himself to is the one hundred day *aragyō* 荒行 at Nakayama Hokekyō-ji 中山法華經寺,⁷ during which time the priest is almost totally isolated from the outside world. A ten-year period away from wife and children for the sake of religious discipline would be unthinkable to the average Nichiren Buddhist priest.⁸

⁶ Significantly, though Nichikō claims not only to understand why his father abandoned his family but also to respect him as his father and as a great religious leader, he and his father remain unable to watch television at home together even if they are interested in the same program, and they usually do not communicate directly with each other but through Nichikō's wife (NIWANO 1982, pp. 127–28).

⁷ For more information on Nakayama Hokekyō-ji and this *aragyō* see NAKAO 1973 and NAKAYAMA HOKEKYŌ-JISHI HENSAN INKAI 1981.

⁸ I have lived in and worked at Ikegami Honmon-ji 池上本門寺, one of the largest and most powerful Nichiren Buddhist temple complexes in Japan, for over four years. When I mentioned the possibility to a number of priests of their abandoning their families for religious discipline for a period of ten years, they were all aghast at the thought.

As we have seen, Niwano's behavior, which runs counter to Risshō Kōseikai teachings and the norms of Japanese society, was justified by claiming divine revelation as the causal factor and obliquely citing the precedent established by Śākyamuni. Such rationalization is possible when we are dealing with the male leader of the organization, but when we look at the lives of ordinary members of Risshō Kōseikai we see that domestic problems arising because of overcommitment to Risshō Kōseikai teachings and goals cannot be so easily explained. And such problems—because of the structure of the family in Risshō Kōseikai and Japanese society in general—fall disproportionately upon female members.

Since the problems encountered by Risshō Kōseikai members are probably best explained in their own words, I will present a *taiken* 体験 (a narrative of personal experience usually given on festival days and at meetings) delivered by a female adherent. This *taiken* was narrated by Tanuma Kiyō, a woman in her mid-forties, at the Risshō Kōseikai Tokyo headquarters on 28 December 1985 during the monthly memorial service held for the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman 八幡大菩薩.

Personal Narrative

The study of personal narratives has recently become a field of general scholarly interest.⁹ There are numerous reasons for this interest. Personal narratives, for one, are not abstract academic constructs but units of discourse defined and articulated by the people or groups under study, insuring that the content is important to the individual or group relating them. They are also presented at times of heightened activity when the individual's or group's inner feelings or norms are most clearly on display.¹⁰ This scholarly interest has developed in tandem with a more specific investigation of the narratives' importance and use in religious contexts, especially in Christian sects in the southern United States (LAWLESS 1988a, 1988b; TITON 1988) and in the Japanese New Religions (ANDERSON 1988, 1994, 1994; HARDACRE 1979, 1984). In these studies the narratives of personal experience become primary data on patterns of recruitment, on the internalization of the group's teachings and norms, and on the range of beliefs in the New Religions. The *taiken* that follows contains information on a number of these points, but in this essay I wish to focus primarily on

⁹ For a list of publications in this area see the bibliography in STAHL 1989.

¹⁰ For a detailed discussion of these points see BRUNER 1986.

the problems that arise in the narrator's life due to an overcommitment of time and energy to Risshō Kōseikai activities.¹¹

[Tanuma] Kaiso Kaichō Sensei 開祖会長先生,¹² please. Everyone, please. [applause] Congratulations on Hachiman Daibosatsu day. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak today.

It was in May 1972 that I encountered the wonderful teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra*. It was shortly after my husband's mother committed suicide. She hadn't been healthy and had therefore been the center of attention in our family. I'm not a particularly capable person, but I devoted myself to helping her. I wanted to be loved by her. I wanted to be a good wife. I always thought of her. I felt I had to devote myself to her and not so much to my husband and children, and I thought that if I did so she would be satisfied with me. That's what I believed.

However, she threw away her precious life. I was surprised, stunned, and speechless. I didn't shed tears of pain, but tears of regret. Why did she die? I had worked so hard. What hadn't I done? After her death I was unable to do anything. I sat in front of her *ihai* 位牌 every day and asked her: Why? Why? I couldn't go out into the neighborhood. I waited every day for my husband and children to return. When they did I took out my frustration on them.

Wada and the head of our group, Yamamoto, came to talk to me. I hadn't talked to anyone, but when they came I could tell them about the pain that was in my heart. They listened and said, "It's painful not being able to talk to anyone about this. You now have such feelings of pain and therefore your mother-in-law can't rest peacefully. It isn't your fault that she died. It isn't anyone's fault. It's fate. Rather than harbor such feelings you should be happy at home for the sake of your husband and children. It is your mother-in-law's desire that you change. This will make

¹¹ The *taiken* presented at these large monthly meetings are usually taped by the staff of Risshō Kōseikai for later use. I would like to thank the staff for making this and other tapes available to me for my research, and Ōtsuki Takahiro for help in translating this *taiken*. At these large meetings one hour is usually devoted to the presentation of *taiken*, during which time two twenty-minute *taiken* are given, followed by twenty minutes of discussion by a Kōseikai leader. I have deleted the introductions, the first *taiken*, and the discussion that followed. Readers interested in the complete transcription/translation are referred to ANDERSON 1988, pp. 145–61. The reader should bear in mind that the events related in this *taiken* cover a fourteen-year period from 1972 to 1985 and that Tanuma does not always narrate events in sequential order.

¹² The title by which Niwano Nikkyō is referred to in Risshō Kōseikai. The group usually translates it as "President-Teacher."

her happy. Stop brooding on this alone. We will help you get through this.” The wonderful teachings of Kaichō Sensei were like a drop of water falling on the desert of my mind. They presented the teachings to me as if I were a child.

Earlier I had had a hard, closed heart, but this gradually changed. It opened, and my cold, injured heart was healed. As a result of this I joined Kōseikai. I sat in *hōza* 法座¹³ and heard what other people were saying. “Can you greet people cheerfully? Can you dedicate yourself to your husband? Are you thankful for being a wife and mother?” When I heard such things, I felt that I couldn’t do anything. I participated in *hōza* numerous times. My heart became more lively, like a fish being put back into water. Until then I had had no feelings, but I now felt refreshed.

With the help of other members I started to lead others. Some people received me warmly and listened to me. Other people hated religion and wouldn’t listen. The people who listened intently were few. I was told, “You haven’t listened to others and so they aren’t listening to you. The people you have met are the mirror of your heart, and that is your treasure. Their attitude is the same as yours. You have to remember this. Please don’t forget this and practice more.” After this I tried to lead my relatives and neighbors. Through the people I led, I began slowly to understand my own self-centeredness and the poverty of my heart. I really began to know the joy of having entered Kōseikai.

My husband and I began our married life searching here and there for a hospital for mother, but that was no trouble. At that time I was very happy if I could walk together with mother. She taught me various things, one by one, and it was interesting and fun. She told me many things about her past life. My husband and I really wanted to make her life a happy one. We wanted to make a cheerful, happy family. We had two children, and the people who knew us envied our happiness.

I learned the ways of the house and took over the neighborhood contacts that mother used to have. And so I began to feel that I was really something special. I didn’t notice my self-centered feelings. As our married life continued, I arrived at the point where I didn’t want to listen to mother’s talk anymore. When she complained, I would get mad. This happened very often.

¹³ *Hōza* is a form of group counseling that Kōseikai uses with its members. People sit together in a circle (sometimes called “the circle of compassion”) and discuss any problems they are having in life with Kōseikai leaders. For an in-depth discussion of *hōza* see DALE 1975.

Our two children were not healthy, so I had to take them to the hospital every day. Since I needed money for the hospital, I began taking in sewing work at home. Mother and the children were sick, my husband's salary was small, and so I had to suffer like this, and I began to look down on my husband as a fool. I thought that all this pain was falling only on me. Now I understand that even though mother was in bed a lot at that time, she was suffering, and it makes me sad. At that time I had the feeling that I was doing everything for her. I constantly complained to my husband. I didn't understand what a fool I was until after mother killed herself.

Even if you have no money or possessions, a warm heart is very important. If I had been connected with Kōseikai earlier, I could have made mother happy. I don't want to waste this painful experience (*taiken*), so now I do my best to lead other young wives to this wonderful teaching of Kaiso Kaichō Sensei.

We received our slogan from Kaiso Kaichō Sensei this year, and I received the important post of head of the women's section. Until that time, though I practiced the teachings actively, I was rather lazy. So when they asked me to be the head, I was really perplexed. I didn't want to accept the post and thought of saying so, but then I remembered something I had heard in *hōza*. "Whatever you say are the words of the Buddha. You should meekly say yes when asked to help. The Buddha has set the path for you, and the shortest way to happiness is to follow this path." I had many desires, and when I heard the word "happiness" I put my hands together and gave thanks.

I was still uneasy, though, and went to the group leader's house for advice. The leader said, "The Buddha knows of your lack of strength. Your role as head of the women's section means that you should respect your husband and not complain. Think of others' pain as your own and let this be your practice. Your taking this post is a very good thing. You must accept it."

My husband wasn't happy with my teaching activities, and when I told him about this post he said I could accept only if it didn't cause problems in the family and if I did it for just one year. After that I attended women's group activities, a larger area group's activities, and did my duties as a housewife very diligently. I was very diligent. My husband and children naturally had to endure a certain amount, but at that time I began to apologize to them and ask their forgiveness. I thanked my lonely husband and children from my heart. I began to feel that the small

amount of time that we had together, because I was so busy, was very important and had to be spent happily. Because of the support of the Buddha, I had changed and felt this way.

My children became healthier, and my family was much happier than before. You're only in this world for a short time. I thought that all my problems had disappeared. My feelings of gratitude disappeared, and I once again became self-centered. The Buddha was worried about me.

At that time I began attending two different study groups and had to spend nights away from home. These study groups were for the purpose of developing a meek, gentle heart. There were times when I returned home and couldn't get in as the door was locked from the inside. My kind husband complained, "You get together with women who have the time to ignore their families." I couldn't listen to this meekly. My original self-centered heart appeared again. I thought many times that my religious belief and the family had just become too troublesome.

At that time I was supported only by the group leader and other believers. My young daughter also supported me. She said, "I know you're lonely, Father, but Mother has problems too and so you have to endure," and put her hands together. After I heard her words, I realized I had been foolish.

My daughter was now grown up, and had her coming-of-age ceremony at twenty. That year the Buddha began making arrangements for her marriage and she married a nice person. A very sad, lonely feeling arose in my heart. My husband loved this daughter very much, and our son too was very lonely. I can't forget the sight of my husband crying quietly in bed. I began to realize how important our daughter had been to our family. From then on our son's head and stomach began to hurt. He lost his appetite and vomited. We took him to the hospital, but they couldn't find anything wrong. The doctor said the problem was psychosomatic. I told our son that he stayed in the house too much and should go out more often. However, he remained depressed and stayed home. I didn't feel that his problems were due to me.

I went out a lot in order to help others and wasn't home much. About that time I received a call from Eiko, a member of the women's group. She said, "I shouldn't have been so actively involved in teaching activities. I believed the teaching of Kaichō Sensei was wonderful, but when I was active in teaching my family had many problems. I felt confused. On the surface it appears

your family is being helped, but they aren't. You should stay at home and think about what is causing your problems."

When I heard Eiko's comments, I understood the mistakes I had made. I returned to the feelings that I had had when I first joined Risshō Kōseikai. The purpose of my joining was to make my family happy. After I joined and accepted various roles, I tried to listen to others' problems and understand them, but I was acting not for my family but for my position and my own self-satisfaction.

Among the words of the head of the *kyōkai* 教会 are the following: "Men are always lonely. No matter what your husband says you must respond 'Yes that's so.' The best wife is a kind wife who acts in this way." Since I was self-centered, I didn't listen to what my husband and children said. I kept them at a distance. I apologized from the bottom of my heart. After this my son's illness immediately got better.

Eiko also said, "Until now when I went to the *kyōkai* I thought everything was okay at home. From my husband, children, and mother I demanded this and that. If things didn't work out, I always thought it was someone else's fault. The Buddha pushed me back into my own home so that I could awaken. When I started staying at home my husband started practicing more. I was very thankful for this arrangement and rededicated myself to the teachings. I became involved in PTA and other things and everyone was happy and I did my best." When I heard this I realized the wondrous workings of the Buddha. When my attitude changed, others saw this and rededicated themselves to the teachings.

I am thankful for the teachings of Kaiso Kaichō Sensei. Thank you very much Kaiso Kaichō Sensei. Today in the schools there are so many incredible things happening—violence, bullying, even murder. If we want peace to come into the world, we have to follow the teachings. Kaiso Kaichō Sensei feels this way. For the purpose of returning to the teachings we in the women's group will do our best to lead others. Kaiso Kaichō Sensei, thank you very much. [applause] Everyone, thank you for listening to me so quietly and attentively.

Analysis of the Taiken

Helen Hardacre's research on Reiyūkai *taiken*, which focuses on how sex-role norms are instilled in female adherents, provides a useful

basis for analyzing the above *taiken*. Hardacre, after studying numerous *taiken* of female Reiyūkai members, postulated a seven-stage progression marking “the process of acquiring conservative norms and values”:

- 1 close contact with a leader during a period of distress;
- 2 allocation of increasing amounts of time to the organization and more contact with its leaders;
- 3 acceptance of an interpretation of the original problem in terms of religious notions linked to social norms;
- 4 acceptance of blame for the problem;
- 5 repentance and apology;
- 6 cessation of activity inconsistent with the norms accepted in stage three; and,
- 7 assumption of a leadership role.

(HARDACRE 1984, pp. 193–96)

Since Risshō Kōseikai split off from Reiyūkai and took much of the latter’s ritual, teaching, and beliefs with it, it is not surprising that the same pattern also holds true for Risshō Kōseikai *taiken*. While all seven stages can be found in the *taiken* presented above, I am particularly interested in stages two and seven, since these stages can, if carried to an extreme, lead to domestic conflict and thereby endanger one of the major stated goals of the group: the creation of a happy family.

In the above *taiken* we note that the “period of distress” occurs after Tanuma’s mother-in-law committed suicide. At this time two women from the local Risshō Kōseikai women’s group meet Tanuma and listen to her problems. She begins to attend meetings and gradually becomes more involved with the group, attending *hōza* meetings and engaging in proselytization—in other words, she enters the bodhisattva way. This allocation of increasing amounts of time to the group’s activities (stage two) has a number of implications. From the group’s and narrator’s perspective, it demonstrates her increasing belief in, internalization, and acceptance of the group’s teachings and worldview. Since this increased involvement develops outside the home, however, it can have especially negative consequences for women, whose main focus of attention, according to Risshō Kōseikai and much of Japanese society, should be the family.

Tanuma dates her initial involvement in Risshō Kōseikai activities to 1972 but narrates her *taiken* in 1985, the year in which she was asked to head the women’s section (stage seven) and deepen her involvement in the bodhisattva way. The role of section leader obviously

requires a much greater investment of time and effort than that of an ordinary adherent. We learn that Tanuma's husband has not been happy even with her earlier commitment, and agrees to let her assume the position "only if it [doesn't] cause problems in the family and if [she does] it for just one year." The problem crystallizes when her husband complains after she begins spending nights away from home at training sessions. Tanuma does not see the error of her ways until another member of the women's group (Eiko) tells her that when she herself allocated too much time to Risshō Kōseikai activities "[her] family had many problems." She becomes confused, faced with a seemingly unresolvable conundrum: the group requires increased participation from her to demonstrate belief in and acceptance of group norms, but as a result she must spend more time away from the family, which the teachings tell her should be the central focus of a woman's life. The problem can apparently be resolved only by reducing the commitment to the group in favor of the family.

The gendered subtext of Tanuma's *taiken* leads one to ask if male adherents have similar experiences. We have already summarized Niwano's overwhelming commitment to Kōseikai, the suffering it caused his family, and his rationalization for his behavior. But what happens in the case of an ordinary male adherent, one, that is, who is not a leader?

While it seems logical to assume that a scenario similar to the one described in Tanuma's *taiken* could arise in a male adherent's life, to the best of my knowledge it has never been the subject of a *taiken*. There are a number of possible reasons for this, one of the most obvious being that males do not relate *taiken* as often as females. In an interview with the editor of some of Kōseikai's monthly magazines, I was told that when they prepare a special issue on a certain topic and want relevant *taiken* they send a notice out to the various branches requesting such *taiken*. Usually 80–90% of the ones they receive are from women, although in their publications they correct this imbalance so that usually one out of four of the *taiken* are by men. This fact alone, however, does not explain the absence of male *taiken* on the theme of overcommitment and the resulting problems it creates in the family.

An even more plausible explanation is that men in Risshō Kōseikai are not as actively involved in the day-to-day activities of the group and in proselytization in general. I found, as did Hardacre in her study of Reiyūkai, that weekday *hōza* meetings at the Tokyo headquarters and smaller branches are attended almost entirely by women. Members explain this by saying that men must work during the day and thus

lack the time for such activities. *Taiken* told by males who have decided to commit their lives to Kōseikai activities do, in fact, exist. An example is the narrative of a man who gambled incessantly, thereby accumulating an enormous debt. He eventually stole from his company, was discovered and fired, and in despair considered suicide. His wife finally took the children and left. He was introduced to the Kōseikai teachings, began proselytizing, and finally decided to devote his life to the organization. At the end of the *taiken* he was finally reconciled with his parents, wife, and children.¹⁴ This man's total commitment to Kōseikai is viewed in a very positive light, for it has given focus and purpose to his life, rekindled a sense of self-respect, and reintegrated him with his family. Thus the theme of total commitment does appear in *taiken* told by men but not with the negative effects that we saw in Tanuma's *taiken*.

Another possible explanation for the lack of male *taiken* dealing with overcommitment is that the lives of men (husbands/fathers), as opposed to the lives of women (wives/mothers), are centered outside the family. Since much of a man's life is spent outside the home anyway, it is reasonable to assume that males would be less open to censure for increased activity outside the home.

Niwano's ten-year abandonment of his family, his rationalization of this, and the presence of female *taiken* (and corresponding lack of male *taiken*) on overcommitment would seem to indicate a gender bias in Risshō Kōseikai. Overcommitted females are vulnerable to criticism not only from their families but also, paradoxically, from the very group that is encouraging them to spend time away from home. Male adherents seem immune from such criticism, or, as in the case of Niwano, an excuse is at hand: they are simply following in the footsteps of Śākyamuni. But is gender the only factor involved in these differing interpretations of commitment? Might not status also be a factor? One way to address these questions is to center our attention on the life of Naganuma Myōkō: the fact that she was a cofounder of Kōseikai, and at the same time female, enables us to broaden our interpretation and to include the factor of status.

Naganuma Myōkō

Naganuma Myōkō's early life followed a pattern of trial and tribulation that is fairly common for female founders/cofounders of New Religions in Japan.¹⁵ Her father lost almost all of the family property,

¹⁴ This *taiken* was published in the May 1985 issue of *Dharma World*.

her mother died when she was six, and she had to go work for an uncle. She was later a maid, then worked in a munitions factory. At the age of twenty-six she married a wastrel, and endured life with an insensitive husband for eleven years before divorcing him. They had a daughter who died at the age of two. She remarried when she was forty-one but was very frail and sick from her years of hardship, and doctors told her she did not have long to live. It was around this time that she met Niwano, who persuaded her to join Reiyūkai. As mentioned above, the two split from Reiyūkai in 1938 and founded Risshō Kōseikai. In 1939 Naganuma began receiving revelations from various gods and spirits. In 1944, one year after Niwano was instructed to abandon his family, Naganuma and her second husband divorced. In the mid-1950s a rift developed between Niwano and some leaders close to Naganuma that almost led to schism. Part of the problem revolved around the return to Tokyo in 1954 of Niwano's family. The threatened schism was ultimately avoided when Naganuma died in 1957 and Niwano consolidated his power and reorganized the group. From this time he began living more "normally" again with his wife and children.¹⁶

As with Niwano and Tanuma, I want to focus here on Naganuma's family life. The descriptions of this aspect of her life are very brief in Kōseikai literature, but we do know that she married and divorced twice, and that she only had one child, who died very young. Her first husband and marriage, which lasted from 1914 until 1925, are dealt with in the following manner:

At the age of twenty-six, she married, but her husband proved to be a spendthrift and a wastrel. She submitted to him for years, and then, when it became clear that there was no hope of his reforming, she divorced him and moved back to Tokyo. In the tenth year of their marriage, this couple had had a daughter, but the child died of illness at the age of two.

(RISSHŌ KŌSEI-KAI ed. 1982, p. 18)

This first marriage and divorce occurred before Naganuma met Niwano and joined Reiyūkai. Her second marriage, which lasted from 1930 to 1944, also ended in divorce and is discussed in the following way:

In Tokyo, Masa [Naganuma] married again, this time to the owner of an ice wholesale dealership, and she opened her own

¹⁵ For a general discussion of women religionists in modern Japan see NAKAMURA 1981.

¹⁶ For a more detailed picture of Naganuma's life see NIWANO 1978.

shop, where she did a thriving business in ice and baked sweet potatoes.

Her husband was incapable of keeping pace with her religious life. Immediately before the end of World War II, they were divorced. He later married a member of Risshō Kōsei-kai, and he and his new wife became students under Myōkō Sensei.

(*RISSHŌ KŌSEI-KAI* ed. 1982, p. 19)

Niwano, when commenting on the sacrifices he made for the group by abandoning his family, characterizes Naganuma's second divorce as a sacrifice that she made for the organization:

Other members [beside myself] have sacrificed family happiness for their religion. Myōkō Sensei and her husband parted because of her heavy schedule of religious activities, and other leaders in the organization have suffered in similar ways.

(NIWANO 1978, p. 143)

Thus we see that "other leaders...have suffered in similar ways." This point depicts leaders as sacrificing and suffering and *not* as causing others to suffer. This is an important point, as we shall see when we examine Kōseikai's position on divorce.

Risshō Kōseikai and Divorce

Simply stated, Risshō Kōseikai teachings claim that divorce is wrong and should be avoided. The view of the organization toward divorce is probably best expressed in the *taiken* of individual members (especially females), among which the topic of divorce is quite common. One of the most frequently narrated scenarios in such *taiken* is for the husband to come home one evening and announce that he has a lover and wants a divorce.¹⁷ The wife/mother who is narrating the *taiken* eventually comes to realize that she is at fault because she has not responded to her husband's needs and has literally driven him into the arms of another woman. She has, in other words, brought her suffering on herself. The narrator is then instructed by Kōseikai group leaders to apologize to her husband and to be more sensitive to his needs. The *taiken* almost always conclude with the husband returning to the family. Even when the husband does not return and the couple ends up getting a divorce, the woman is counseled to be patient and to continue her Kōseikai activities in the hope that her ex-husband

¹⁷ For examples of this kind of *taiken* see the August 1983 or March/April 1992 issues of *Dharma World*.

will eventually return.¹⁸

The *taiken* that deal with divorce, then, have a very simple message: that the woman is at fault, that divorce is to be avoided at all costs, and that the woman should undertake everything possible to prevent it. The numerous reasons for this interpretation include the wife's position in the family in Japan, her economic reliance on her husband, and the general stigma carried by divorce.¹⁹

With this in mind, let us return to Naganuma and "other leaders in the organization [who] have suffered in similar ways," i.e., divorced. Naganuma's first divorce occurred before she met Niwano and encountered Reiyūkai teachings, but how do we explain the second parting, which took place after she had been exposed to the Reiyūkai and Risshō Kōseikai teachings that divorce is wrong? The justification, according to Niwano, is that she and other divorced leaders "sacrificed family happiness for their religion." The message seems clear: if you are a leader and conflict arises in your family because of your religious activities, either your family must endure (as in Niwano's case) or you are justified in relieving yourself of these hindrances (as in the cases of Naganuma and the other leaders). If you are an ordinary devotee, however, and domestic conflicts arise because of your religious activities (a problem, as we have seen, that appears to affect only females), then you either try to get your family to accept your level of involvement (as Tanuma originally did), or you scale back your involvement in the organization and return to your family (as Eiko did and Tanuma eventually does). Abandoning one's family and/or divorce are simply not options. Apparently when gender and status clash within the Risshō Kōseikai ideology, the latter takes precedent.

Summary

In its literature, lectures, and meetings Risshō Kōseikai stresses the importance of following the bodhisattva way—the practice of striving to attain enlightenment not only for oneself but for all sentient beings. Adherents are told that the bodhisattva way is "the noblest form of Buddhist practice." This noble goal, however, has the potential for causing conflict in the family—an outcome contrary to Kōseikai's fundamental purpose, which is the creation of happy families. The conflict arises when female adherents try to put this way into

¹⁸ For an example of this kind of *taiken* see the January/February 1992 issue of *Dharma World*.

¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion of these matters see HARDACRE 1984, pp. 118–26.

practice through increased involvement in the group's activities. Such activities take the woman outside the home and may therefore cause her family to feel neglected, as illustrated in Tanuma's *taiken*. She tells us that "the purpose of my joining was to make my family happy," but the end result was the opposite. *Kōseikai* activities took up so much of her time that her husband began to complain. We have also seen that males do not relate comparable *taiken*. The lack of such narratives seems to indicate that male adherents are not vulnerable to such criticism, and I advanced three possible explanations for this: 1) men do not relate *taiken* as often as women; 2) men are not as involved as women in the day-to-day activities of *Kōseikai* because of their work responsibilities, and 3) men's work lives are centered outside the family so that increased external activity would lead to less criticism than it would for a woman. The one clear case of a male causing conflict in his family by overcommitment to *Kōseikai* is Niwano Nikkyō. But while Niwano could rationalize his actions by comparing himself to Śākya-muni, this option is not open to female adherents. The absence of male *taiken* and the nature of Niwano's rationalization both point to a gender bias in Risshō *Kōseikai* thought.

An investigation of Naganuma Myōkō's life and *Kōseikai*'s position on divorce indicates that status is also a factor. Naganuma and other leaders are portrayed as suffering and as sacrificing their own happiness because of their commitment to *Kōseikai* ideals. Ridding oneself through divorce of hindrances to the bodhisattva ideal of serving others can be justified in the case of a leader, but this option is not open to regular female adherents, who are admonished to preserve their marriage and family above all else. Female adherents are therefore caught in a double bind between two sets of ideals, one of which draws them toward religious work outside the home and away from their families, and the other of which tells them that the most important thing is to stay at home and create a happy family. Thus we see that religious ideals, if too closely observed, have the potential for causing problems in the lives of adherents and their families—problems that arise because of the conflict between adherents' personal religious goals and their social/familial obligations and commitments.²⁰

²⁰ Antonio R. GUALTIERI (1993) made a number of observations in an article on founders of religions and their adherents that show interesting parallels with my argument. In his introduction Gualtieri claims:

This paper examines the discrepancies between the spiritual and moral demands of the founders of great religious traditions and the actual outlook and practice of their followers. The term "apostasy" serves as a trenchant designation for the defection of followers from founders. Such deviation is often construed as evidence of human weakness or hypocrisy, but it should be seen as evidence of the

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intuitive good sense of the religious masses. The reluctance fully to embody the founders' soteriological programs and moral injunctions testifies to the devotees' commitment to enduring structures of personality that the founders' transformative intentions radically contradict (p. 101). At issue in the following analysis... is the co-existence within religious tradition of two seemingly irreconcilable *normative* worldviews and moral obligations, whose mutual incompatibility is often blunted—even muted—by metaphysical or pastoral legerdemain. (p. 104; emphasis in original)

After examining both the Christian and Theravada Buddhist cases Gualtieri concludes:

The endorsement of apostasy implies that humans have an ontological bias towards the maximalization of familial loyalties, personal health and well-being, sensual pleasure, forceful defense of individual and kin security. All of these this-worldly values and goals are inimical to the Buddha's otherworldly soteriology or the Christ's agapeistic morality. (p. 115)

And when focusing more specifically on the abandonment of family he claims:

The Buddha's paradigm of world-withdrawal is subjected to humane revisionism by apostate Buddhists. The abandonment of wife and child symbolizing the rupture of all worldly, personal attachments in Siddhartha Gautama's Great Renunciation, is instinctively rejected by the mass of devotees. (p. 117)

These observations parallel Tanuma's *taiken*, in which she rejects the "higher" religious ideals of the group in favor of family.

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