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Political Waves in the Zen Sea

The Engaku-ji Circle in Early Meiji Japan

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This exploration of the activities and ideas of Rinzai abbot Imakita Kōsen (1816–1892) and his lay disciple Torio Tokuan (1847–1905) highlights the sociopolitical dimensions of an important religious network that developed in the Kantō area in early Meiji, and indicates that ordained and lay Zen Buddhists collaborated closely in the ideological movements of the 1880s. It is suggested that the conventional category "conservative," though generally applicable to these Buddhists, is not always adequate to the nuances of political culture during this period, and that "Zen" as a distinctive idea was not prominent in the nationalistic discourse of the time.

PUBLIC DISCOURSE ABOUT THE FUTURE of Japan took on a singular urgency in Meiji society during the 1880s. Many Japanese who lived through the Restoration of 1868 had become increasingly concerned in the ensuing years about the pace of change in their country and its implications for their national cultural identity. Now they also faced the prospect of constitutional government in 1889 and a national assembly the following year. As Carol GLUCK notes, "for those who lived through it, the decade of the eighties had a headlong forward thrust. For every backward glance toward the changes that had transpired in the recent past, there were scores of eyes fixed upon the future, in particular on the year 1890, when the first elected national assembly would inaugurate a new political system" (1985, p. 21).

Buddhists, of course, also fixed their eyes upon the future, and several participated vigorously in the public debate about Japan's emerging

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political and cultural identity. Modern scholars of Meiji Buddhism have treated the views and activities of well-known leaders such as the Jōdo priest Fukuda Gyōkai 福田行誡 (1809–1888), Jōdo Shin leaders Shimaji Mokurai 島地黙雷 (1838–1911) and Inoue Enryō 井上円了 (1858–1919), Ōuchi Seiran 大内青巒 (1845–1918), associated with both Sōtō and Shin, and the Shingon priest Shaku Unshō 釈 雲照 (1827–1909).[1] Little scholarly attention has been directed, however, to the Zen Buddhist leaders of the time, who were less prominent in public debates about religion. Western scholars often limit their remarks about Meiji-period Zen to its most visible representative, Shaku Sōen 釋 宗演 (1860–1919).[2] In particular, recent discussions of the relationship between Zen and Japanese nationalism invariably take the 1890s, or the figures of Shaku Sōen and his disciple Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙 (1870–1966), as a starting point.[3] Even Sōen, however, did not become a significant religious activist until late Meiji, after the "ideological seizure" of the late 1880s.[4] Older Rinzai Buddhists, in contrast, experienced as adults the exhilaration, trauma, bewilderment, and general "civic intensity" that characterized the Restoration and the first two Meiji decades. Although these earlier figures are less well known, their responses to the developments of the period helped shape the modern sociopolitical identity of Zen Buddhism. Consideration of their ideas and activities provides a useful perspective on the current debate over the role of Zen in the formation of modern Japanese ideologies. This essay accordingly focuses on the political life of early Meiji practitioners at Engaku-ji 円覚寺, the important Rinzai temple in Kamakura with which Sōen and Suzuki were affiliated.[5]

Japanese Buddhist leaders in general, especially from the late 1880s, shared a way of thinking that is often characterized as conservative, nationalistic, and anti-Christian. In the years immediately following the Restoration, Buddhists had been shaken, not only by anti-Buddhist

[1] See, for example, KASHIWAHARA 1990 and TAMAMURO 1980.

[2] For remarks about Sōen, see two recent works that deal with Meiji Buddhism: KETELAAR 1990, pp. 159–60, 165–66, 197–98, 208; and THELLE 1987, esp. pp. 226–43. Sōen was a central figure in the early propagation of Zen in the West, beginning with his participation in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

[3] See references in the essays in *Rude Awakenings* (an excellent recent collection edited by James HEISIG and John MARALDO), e.g., HIRATA Seikō, "Zen Buddhist Attitudes to War," p. 9; Christopher IVES, "Ethical Pitfalls in Imperial Zen," p. 17; or more generally, Robert SHARF's "Whose Zen?" in the same volume, and the latter's "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism" (1995).

[4] "Ideological seizure" is a term GLUCK uses to refer to the intensification of ideological activities during this time (1985, p. 20).

[5] Engaku-ji was founded by Wu-xue Zu-yuan 無学祖元 (1226–1286) under the patronage of Hōjō Tokimune 北条時宗 (1251–1284) in 1282.

rhetoric (an intensification of earlier Confucian and Kokugaku 国学 critiques), but also by overt persecution, massive loss of infrastructure and revenue, and, of course, a marked decrease in social prestige.[6] In the 1870s and 1880s, Buddhists were also exposed, along with the rest of Japan, to a plethora of new ideas and institutions. The Meiji state promoted a dizzying series of social and cultural changes in the name of "civilization and enlightenment" (*bunmei kaika* 文明開化). Ideas of social equality, representative assembly, and freedom of religion, among others, were hotly debated in the public sphere.

The older ways of thinking, of course, did not simply fade away. As the Meiji period wore on, traditional ideas were enthusiastically and diversely represented by conservative ideological movements. These "conservatives" did not merely seek to duplicate the past, however. Karl Mannheim has pointed out that conservatism is a conscious, reflective response to particular changes—a deliberate counterproposal to progressive movements. Conservatives retain elements of the older way of thinking, but reformulate them, consciously placing them in a new intellectual framework. Conservatism is thus necessarily influenced by the ideas of the opposing ("progressive") movement.[7] As we shall see in the following pages, the notion that conservatism is a novel configuration of old and new ideas provides insight into the political culture that characterized the Engaku-ji community during early Meiji. I will depict this culture by examining the political views and ideological activities of (1) Zen master Imakita Kōsen 今北洪川 (1816–1892) and (2) Imakita's prominent lay follower, Torio Koyata (Tokuan) 鳥尾小弥太(得庵)(1848–1905).

Imakita Kōsen's Political World

Imakita Kōsen had already been working as a professional Confucian scholar for several years in Osaka when, allegedly having grown dissatisfied with Neo-Confucian systems of thought, he began to study

[6] See COLLCUTT (1986) for a succinct account of the changes experienced by Buddhists (and their responses to these) in the transition from late Tokugawa to early Meiji.

[7] Mannheim distinguishes conservatism from traditionalism, which, he says, is simply an unconscious, psychological predisposition—an "instinctive" fear of innovation based on attachment to old ways. Whereas the traditionalist is unreflectively attached to older patterns of life and thought, the conservative proposes, in effect, a new system (MANNHEIM 1971, pp. 145–47, 153, 157). Mannheim's reflections on the nature of conservatism referred to an entirely different historical context from that of Meiji Japan, and his approach to the study of knowledge is based on philosophical premises that I do not necessarily share. Nevertheless, I believe some of his categories and distinctions are useful for analyzing early Meiji thought. Attempts to apply Mannheim's notion of political conservatism to early Meiji date at least to MATSUMOTO Sannosuke's 1958 essay.

Zen Buddhism. He took the tonsure in 1840 and thereafter practiced primarily under Rinzai masters Daisetsu Shōen 大拙承演 (1797–1855) and Gisan Zenrai 儀山善来 (1802–1878). He received the seal of approval from the latter and became a Dharma successor (*hassu* 法嗣) in Gisan's lineage. After about eighteen years of practice, Imakita was appointed abbot of Yōkō-ji 永興寺, a temple in Iwakuni (in today's Yamaguchi Prefecture). During his time in Iwakuni, Imakita wrote his best-known work, *Zenkai ichiran* 禅海一瀾 (One wave in the Zen sea), a Zen Buddhist commentary on thirty key Neo-Confucian ideas.[8] In 1875, after the Restoration, Imakita was appointed head of the newly established "Tokyo General School of the Ten Mountains" of the Rinzai sect (Tōkyō jūzan sōkō 東京十山総黌) and, later that year, abbot of Engaku-ji in nearby Kamakura.[9] When the General School closed after less than two years, Imakita moved permanently to Kamakura and concentrated his energies on invigorating the Engaku-ji Zen program.

D. T. Suzuki comments in his monograph *Imakita Kōsen* that the Zen master was not concerned with the political developments of his time so much as with the improvement of Zen monastic education and the spread of the Zen teaching (Suzuki 1992, pp. 47–48). Imakita did not maintain an overt political presence—he did not become involved in public debates about state policy toward Buddhism, as did, for example, the Jōdo Shin leader Shimaji Mokurai. Nor do we hear of Imakita sparring with pro-Shinto government officials during the first Meiji years, as did his "older brother in the Dharma," Ogino Dokuon 荻野独園 (1819–1895). As Suzuki implies, Imakita's primary concern was religious training; he rarely mentions political events in his writings, and when he does, it is usually in the context of remarks about religious or educational issues.

Nevertheless, Imakita did develop a distinct, if understated, socio-political identity. There are few surprises here. Like many Buddhist monks who were born and educated during the Tokugawa period, Imakita affirmed common Shinto and Confucian values throughout his life. He maintained the importance of loyalty and filial piety as standards of social conduct and routinely expressed reverence for the kami and their imperial "descendants."[10] In practice, Imakita adopted an attitude of modest deference to the government, whether the pre-Restoration government of Iwakuni or the new Meiji state. During his

[8] For a modern Japanese rendition with annotations, see Imakita 1987. The work was originally written in 1862 and published in block-print edition in 1874.

[9] SKN, p. 12b. "Ten Mountains" here refers to the nine Rinzai temple lines, plus Ōbaku, which was counted as one of the Rinzai lines at this time.

[10] For Imakita's acceptance of elements of the Meiji "Shinto" ideology, see Suzuki 1992, pp. 110–11.

tenure as abbot of Yōkō-ji he did not express views for or against the shogunate, though he lived in the Chōshū area throughout the period of the domain's conflicts with the Bakufu.[11] For the most part, Imakita maintained this subdued stance even when he felt that Meiji policies were having a deleterious effect on the Zen sangha. Perhaps wisely, he said nothing when the campaign of "separating kami and buddhas" (*shinbutsu bunri* 神仏分離) led to the elimination and consolidation of Buddhist temples in the Yamaguchi area. In the summer of 1868, the Rinzai temple Zuiō-ji 瑞応寺 in Hagi was made the monastic center for the entire area, and Imakita was appointed chief instructor.[12]

After the Restoration, Imakita regularly demonstrated respect for the emperor and related institutions. After he moved to the Tokyo area, he followed the Zen Buddhist custom of marking each New Year by holding services to celebrate the emperor's long life, and sometimes visited the imperial palace to pay obeisance in person.[13] When the imperial princess Kazu-no-miya 和宮 (Seikan'in-no-miya 静寛院宮) died in 1877, Imakita attended the funeral services held in Zōjō-ji 増上寺 in Tokyo and burned incense in her honor (SKN, p. 14b). The following year Imakita personally paid his respects to the emperor at Shōjōkō-ji 清浄光寺, a Ji 時 sect temple in Fujisawa (near Kamakura), when the emperor stopped there on his way back from a tour of Hokuriku (SKN, p. 16a). Much of this behavior was probably expected of high-ranking Buddhist priests at this time—after all, most of them, including Imakita, were employees of the government. From 1872, when the new Ministry of Doctrine (Kyōbushō 教部省) initiated its pro-Shinto "Movement to Promulgate the Great Teaching" (*taikyō senpu undō* 大教宣普運動), Imakita rose through a series of positions as doctrinal instructor (*kyōdōshoku* 教導職) until he reached the rank of Provisional Major Instructor (*gon-daikyōsei* 権大教正) in 1880.[14]

In short, Imakita rarely differed publicly with the government; when he did so, it was invariably in response to policies affecting

[11] See SAWADA 1994, esp. pp. 226–28.

[12] In 1871 he transferred the center to Jōfuku-ji 乗福寺 in Yamaguchi (SKN, p. 11b).

[13] Bimonthly rituals to celebrate the longevity of the ruler (*shukushin* 祝聖) are a time-honored tradition in Chan and Zen; Imakita's services for the emperor were not remarkable in themselves. It is worth noting, however, that Imakita's earlier performance of these routine rituals is not recorded in his biography; only the special New Year services carried out in the Meiji period merited mention. These special services in honor of the emperor are recorded successively for 1876–1877 and 1882–1885; see SKN, pp. 13b, 14a, 17b, 19a, 21a, 21b, respectively. The 1876–1877 rituals were carried out at the "Daikyōin," which in this context means the Rinzai General School in Tokyo.

[14] SKN, p. 17a. The details of his promotions until then are noted in SKN, pp. 11b, 12a, 13a, 14a. Imakita's appointments to the General School and Engaku-ji were, of course, also sanctioned by the Ministry of Doctrine.

Buddhist monastic life. In 1872, for example, when the government issued a prohibition of monastic begging (*takuhatsu* 托鉢), Imakita sent a petition to the Ministry of Doctrine requesting that the prohibition be rescinded.[15] For the most part, Meiji Zen biographical sources report only friendly contacts between Imakita and government officials. After Imakita took up his posts in the capital as head of the Rinzai General School and in nearby Kamakura as abbot of Engaku-ji, his contacts with government officials naturally increased. Shishido Tamaki 宍戸 璣 (1829–1901), in his capacity as Vice-Minister of Doctrine (*Kyōbu tayū* 教部大輔), had officially invited Imakita to become abbot of Engaku-ji.[16] In 1876 Shishido invited Imakita to a banquet at his villa in Sugamo. There the two men played Go and composed poetry along with other officials. We learn from Imakita's official biography that "the [guests] remained enthusiastic all day long and continued [the festivities] by lamplight."[17] In the 1870s the Tosa Confucian scholar Okunomiya Masayoshi (Zōsai) 奥宮正由(慥斎) (1811–1877), a middle-level official in the Ministry of Doctrine, practiced regularly under Imakita and facilitated publication of *Zenkai ichiran.*[18] Later, several other government employees became regular participants in the lay program at Engaku-ji.[19]

In 1877 Imakita publically articulated a decidedly progovernment position. At a religious service in support of the government's military efforts during the Seinan War, he commented (in a rather Taoist vein): "When the clearing [of the skies] reaches its extreme point, clouds inevitably develop. When order reaches its utmost degree, rebellion inevitably comes about. This is one of the many things in the

[15] He presented the petition through the offices of Ogino Dokuon, who was head priest of the government-sponsored Daikyōin at the time. There was no immediate response. (SKN, p. 11b). The petition is not contained in Irokawa and Gabe 1986.

[16] Ogino 1893, p. 2a. Dokuon himself was probably most responsible for Imakita's appointment. According to one modern biographer, Dokuon may have exerted some influence on Shishido. See Ogisu 1981, p. 112.

[17] SKN, p. 14a. The biography, *Sōryōkutsu nenpu,* is largely based on Imakita's own recollections as recounted to Shaku Sōen and other disciples; evidently Imakita wished to record for posterity his cordial relations with these officials. Shishido had once been a Chōshū loyalist samurai. It is possible that Imakita's contacts with him originated when he was living in Iwakuni, Yamaguchi, or Hagi. Also present at the banquet was "Councillor Yamada," probably Yamada Akiyoshi 山田顯義 (1844–1892), an army general and political figure who was another member of the Chōshū circle. SKN, p. 15b, records an occasion in 1878 when Imakita's sermons were attended by several other officials.

[18] Okunomiya was a scholar of the Wang Yang-ming school who had been an educator and school teacher in the Tosa domain during the Bakumatsu period. In his eulogy of Zōsai, Imakita says the two men met in 1873 (SK 2:36a–b). For details on Okunomiya, see Ogino and Obatake 1973, 1:317.

[19] E.g., Tsumaki Seiheki (Yorinori) 妻木棲碧(賴矩) (n.d.). See SKN, p. 16a.

world that are difficult to escape." He went on to refer to the government's military action as "the arising of the dragon of our valiant Meiji Emperor." After praising the emperor for "overthrowing the old evils of the shogunate and unifying the national system," Imakita charged the "Western traitors" with disturbing "the dragon's slumber."

> Because of this, the Emperor stopped his jeweled palanquin in Kyoto. Because of this, the Ministers unfurled their brocade flag in the Western Sea. The Imperial troops were as powerful as tigers. The cruel poison of the traitorous soldiers was like [that of] demons and water vermin.... The evil army was defeated in one day. The noxious fumes [i.e., the rebels] were on the verge of perishing, but their remnant of power grew [strong] again and they have not yet been wiped out.[20]
>
> (SK 3:37b)

Imakita's critical view of Saigō Takamori 西郷隆盛 (1828–1877) and his troops at this time is unremarkable, given the context of his remarks. His grandiloquent rhetoric was designed for the occasion; the service was apparently held at the government-inspired Rinzai General School during Imakita's tenure as director. School staff and government officials were probably in attendance. Imakita's political conformity here is consistent with his cautious attitude during the very different context of pre-Restoration battles in Chōshū, when he lamented the general loss of life but did not venture to criticize either the shogunal or loyalist troops.

After the Seinan War, people opposed to the policies of the emerging Meiji oligarchy became more active in political movements that argued for representative government. The campaign for popular rights, which had begun in 1873, grew into a "movement for freedom and people's rights" (*jiyū minken undō* 自由民権運動) that encompassed diverse local groups, including numerous organizations in Kanagawa Prefecture.[21] The early leaders of this movement were mostly ex-samurai who had been excluded from power, but in the late 1870s many village headmen, landlords, and small-scale entrepreneurs joined the campaign (VLASTOS 1989, p. 406). During the same period, peasant dissatisfaction with the effects of the land tax reform of 1873 gave rise to a number of village protests. One such protest, allegedly "the best-known, and certainly the bloodiest, dispute over proprietary rights" of

[20] The title of Imakita's talk is "Seishū tōheisai o harau saibun" 祓西洲闘兵災祭文 [Invocation to drive away disaster from the troops fighting on the Western Island]. Imakita's remarks were made, as he notes (SK 3:38a) more than a hundred days after the beginning of the war.

[21] IROKAWA (1985) has written about some of these Kanagawa groups.

the time, took place near Kamakura (VLASTOS 1989, pp. 379–80).

The incident occurred in 1878 in a town called Shindo, in the Ōsumi district of Kanagawa. A man named Matsuki Chōemon 松木長右衛門 had taken possession of pawned land by illegally appropriating and using the rightful owner's seal. The peasant who owned the land brought charges against Matsuki to the Yokohama Court and won the case, but when Matsuki appealed to a higher court in Tokyo, the decision was reversed. He then demanded 2,400 yen in legal costs and arrears, although he was well aware that the plaintiff and his supporters had exhausted their resources in litigation fees. In desperation, the peasants decided to take matters into their own hands. A fire broke out in the Matsuki home in Shindo in October 1878 and the local fire squad (not accidentally) was slow to arrive. Twenty-five peasants led by a man named Kanmuri Yaemon 冠弥右衛門 broke into the Matsuki home and assaulted Matsuki and the members of his household. By the time the fire was put out, Matsuki and seven of his household members were dead.

Local officials instructed the police to arrest Kanmuri and several other Shindo villagers who were allegedly involved in the disturbance. But Kanmuri and his companions, charged and found guilty, were regarded as heroes by their fellow villagers. Before long, farming people in the districts of Ōsumi, Yurugi, and Aikō organized a movement in support of the accused peasants. They chose representatives, drew up a petition to commute the prisoners' sentences, and presented it to the prefectural governor, Nomura Yasushi 野村靖 (1842–1909).[22] The petitioners argued that Matsuki's conduct had engendered the resentment of the entire village, and that Kanmuri and his companions had acted in the interests of the community, not simply out of personal animosity.[23] Unlike earlier Kanagawa governors, Nomura was not a progressive (KANAGAWA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT 1985, pp. 190–91). But he realized the intensity of Kanmuri's popular support which had now spread through several Kanagawa districts, and finally agreed to commute the death sentences to prison terms. However, the Shindo incident heightened the fears of Kanagawa authorities that popular political movements were developing beyond their control. The police force was strengthened and instructed to keep a closer watch on political discussion groups.

Kanagawa historians believe that the Shindo uprising contributed

[22] This summary of the Shindo uprising is based on a number of sources; for one accessible account, see NAKAMARU 1974, 236–37. However, Nakamaru erroneously dates the incident October Meiji 10 [1877]. The disturbance in fact took place on 26 October 1878; the petition was first presented to Nomura on 11 November of that year.

[23] "Tangansho" 嘆願書, in KKS, p. 17b.

to the development of opposition movements in the district of Kamakura, where Imakita lived (NAKAMARU 1974, p. 237). Both Imakita's biography and local historical records document that religious leaders in the Kamakura area joined the citizens of Ōsumi, Yurugi, and Aikō in presenting petitions to the governor. The biography states:

> In the fifth month of [1879], Master [Imakita] presented himself at the prefectural office along with the head priests of the two temples, Kofuku 巨福 [Kenchō-ji 建長寺, in Kamakura] and Tōtaku 藤沢 [Shōjōkō-ji 清浄光寺, in neighboring Fujisawa]. He presented a petition at the residence of the prefectural governor from the people of the village of Shindo to spare the lives of a certain Kanmuri as well as over twenty other people. He had an audience with the governor and earnestly made the appeal.[24] (SKN, p.16b)

Imakita was sufficiently in tune with community sentiments to be willing to assist in this kind of crisis. He was not unsympathetic to the injustices and hardships that less-privileged people suffered during the early Meiji period. On the other hand, his primary local acquaintances seem to have been the more affluent members of the rural population, whom he sometimes canvassed for funds to support the monastery.[25] His writings and biography do not indicate that he was involved in social welfare or, indeed, in much interaction with poor people at all, except to preach to them occasionally. In 1885, when many Kanagawa peasants were in desperate poverty as a result of poor harvests, deflationary monetary policies, land taxes, and usurious money lending practices, the Zen master insisted to a lay audience at Engaku-ji that the famine of the previous season was due to their "lack of faith in the True Dharma" and their "karmic sentiments contrary to the Dharma." He argued that these attitudes manifested themselves particularly in their failure to give donations to the monastic sangha (meaning, in this context, Engaku-ji). He did allow that if some people were too poor to give alms they could express their commitment to the Dharma by encouraging others to donate (SKN, p. 23b).

Imakita became involved in the Shindo movement as one among many community leaders. The signatories of the petition included

[24] Imakita's petition, dated consistently with the SKN account, is reproduced in HIRATSUKASHI, 1987, pp.442–43. The brief petition presented by Imakita and the other two abbots is distinct from the aforementioned original petition of 1878 (the version reproduced in KKS, pp. 16–22), which was signed by several local Buddhist and Shinto priests.

[25] We are told that between 1881 and 1883, when the reconstruction of the meditation hall at Engaku-ji was being carried out, he solicited funds for the project from wealthy farmers in the villages of the Kamakura area (SKN, p. 19b).

several local Buddhist and Shinto priests, as well as numerous village leaders. Although Imakita cooperated with them on this occasion, like most other Meiji Buddhist leaders, he kept aloof from popular opposition groups.[26] A few progressive lay people practiced under Imakita in the late 1870s, but by the mid-1880s they were no longer heavily involved in Engaku-ji activities.[27] On the other hand, Imakita was an acquaintance, if not a close friend or religious advisor, of several members of the Meiji government and of the conservative opposition, as we shall see.

In 1879, the same year that Imakita supported the Shindo petition, Kanagawa held its first election for the prefectural assembly. It was not precisely a democratic election, since only male household heads who paid over 5 yen in land taxes were eligible to vote. Candidates were limited to male household heads who paid 10 yen. But many landholders and village leaders were inspired by popular rights ideals, and following the prefectural election a movement for the establishment of a national assembly spread throughout Kanagawa. People's rights advocates held speech meetings in the districts of Yurugi, Mitama, Tsukui, and Yokohama, at which wealthy farmers and town representatives expounded their views on the issues with growing vehemence. In 1880, representatives of 23,555 people from nine Kanagawa districts presented the *Genrōin* 元老院, or "Council of Elder Statesmen," with a petition (drawn up with the help of Fukuzawa Yukichi 福沢諭吉, 1835–1901) that called for the establishment of a national assembly (KANAGAWA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT 1985, p. 205). After the imperial edict of October 1881, which announced the future establishment of a national assembly, Kanagawa popular rights groups continued their activism, though their efforts were increasingly hampered by government restrictions.[28]

Zen master Imakita was surely aware of the political currents swirling around Kamakura during the late 1870s and the 1880s. He maintained his usual detachment from the political world, but like other Japanese citizens, he was affected by the ongoing public debate over representative government and did not fail to make his own contribution to it. Particularly in his capacity as a leader of the Rinzai community, Imakita felt he should articulate the implications of cur-

[26] Buddhist leaders of the time generally kept their distance from the popular rights movement itself. See YOSHIDA, vol. 1, pp. 94–95.

[27] An example is the popular rights activist, Nakajima Nobuyuki (Chōjō) 中島信行(長城), 1846–1899.

[28] Nomura took steps to exert more control, in line with the Ministry of Education's directives. From June 1882 the founding of new and branch associations and of unions between associations was prohibited. NAKAMARU 1974, pp. 237–39.

rent political developments for the sangha. After the government's announcement that a national diet would be established in 1890, Imakita pondered the significance of the forthcoming political order and in 1882 expressed his thoughts on the matter in an essay, *Sōryo kokkai junbi ron* 僧侶国会準備論 [On monastic preparation for the national assembly].[29] At the time, Imakita was the Rinzai sect abbot (*kanchō* 管長), and he evidently circulated the essay within the clerical community.

The Zen master's address reflects the general sense of anticipation of a new national order that characterized Japanese society during the 1880s. Like others, Imakita looked forward to the coming of "equal" political rights. The establishment of a national assembly would be a turning-point for Japan—especially, he hoped, for Buddhist Japan. Imakita felt that the monastic community had declined, both in numbers and in the quality of its members. His main focus in "Monastic Preparation" is the need for moral reform in the sangha. He expresses dismay over the prevalence of meat-eating and marrying by Rinzai monks—in his view, such practices utterly destroyed the integrity of the Buddhist teaching. In the essay he holds the monastics themselves responsible for this behavior, but indirectly implicates the government for its interference in Buddhist affairs. He points out that the government could have announced simply that it would not consider the specified behavior illegal. But edict number 133 issued by the Council of State (Dajōkan 太政官) in 1872—the so-called *nikujiki saitai* 肉食妻帯 (eating meat and having wives) decree—has a more "libertarian" tone: "From now on, priests may do as they please in regard to eating meat, having wives, and growing their hair. Moreover, wearing ordinary clothing is acceptable when one is not engaged in Buddhist [ceremonial] activities" (DATE 1930, p. 621).

Imakita comments in his essay that the government did not need to issue statements about these matters, since the sangha already had its own regulations. In fact, the government had acknowledged sectarian rules in 1878 when, in response to repeated protests from Buddhist leaders of various denominations, it modified the 1872 announcement by stating that "edict number 133, which states that the clergy are free to eat meat and marry, only serves to abolish the state law that had prohibited such activities. In no way does the law have anything to do with sectarian regulations."[30] Writing in 1882, Imakita nevertheless simply refers back to the original decree in an effort to persuade his

[29] The Japanese text is contained in SUZUKI 1992, pp. 167–74.

[30] I owe this information, as well as the translation of the addendum to the *nikujiki saitai* edict, to JAFFE 1995, p. 213.

monks that the state was still testing their moral caliber in order to prove that they were "spineless and undiscerning." He points out that the state certainly had not decriminalized clerical marriage and meat-eating out of some sort of special regard for the well-being of the sangha. The abbot thus subtly depicts the government as a kind of seductive "big brother" who was tempting the weak members of the monastic community with "sweet words" (IMAKITA 1882, p. 168). This oblique criticism of the Meiji state contrasts with Imakita's fervent rhetoric in support of the 1877 campaign to subdue Saigō's troops and his reportedly warm relations with Ministry of Doctrine officials throughout his tenure at Engaku-ji. The changing identity of the Zen master's audiences undoubtedly accounts in part for the different "voices" in Imakita's repertoire. It remains clear, however, that the welfare of Zen Buddhism itself was the only issue upon which the Rinzai master chose to take a stand.

Imakita's remarks about government policies are accordingly a minor emphasis in "Monastic Preparation"; his main message is Buddhist reform. He feared that if monastics did not improve their behavior by the time the national assembly began, their corruption would become an issue of national debate. Perhaps an assembly member would initiate a motion to the effect that "monastics are not necessary for national peace and order." If there were enough votes in support of such a motion and it were enacted in government policy, Imakita warned, the consequences for the Buddhist community would be grave (IMAKITA 1882, p. 169). The trauma of the anti-Buddhist (*haibutsu-kishaku* 廃仏毀釈) movement of the first Meiji years was evidently still fresh in the abbot's memory.

Imakita's arguments against clergy marrying, growing their hair, and eating meat were, of course, religious as well as political. A significant portion of his "Monastic Preparation" is devoted to cautioning the Rinzai community that infringements of the vinaya are karmic conditions that lead to existence in the animal realm (*chikushō no gōin* 畜生の業因). The sangha members' present existence as Buddhist monastics was a rare opportunity to enact the Buddha's teachings. If they procrastinated in preparing for the assembly, it would be too late—not only to save the Dharma in Japan, but also to fulfill their own religious goals (IMAKITA 1882, pp. 170–72). If, on the other hand, Zen Buddhists succeeded in reforming themselves, the future diet would not pass anti-Buddhist legislation. The Zen master mused how wonderful it would be if a majority of "assembly members and informed people should agree to make Buddhism the national teaching!" (IMAKITA 1882, pp. 173–74). Like several others caught up in debating the national identity in the 1880s, Imakita had concluded

that Buddhism was surely the best candidate for a "national doctrine" that could, as he puts it, protect Japan from "evil teachings" (*jakyō* 邪教). But in order to meet the challenge of the heterodox teachings that were "trampling on our Dharma-territory (*hōiki* 法域) and plundering the followers of our sect," Zen Buddhists would have to follow the precepts—and ignore, in other words, the infamous government decree (IMAKITA 1882, pp. 173, 174).[31]

By the early 1880s the abbot was convinced of the value of some form of representative government as were many Japanese who openly participated in the progressive movements from which Imakita kept his distance. His expectations of the political order had evolved considerably since his days in Iwakuni. The Zen master welcomed the coming assembly despite the possible risks to Buddhism he envisioned. Once the assembly was in place, he thought, intelligent people would think more seriously about the significance of religion and evaluate the behavior of religious people in an informed manner (IMAKITA 1882, p. 172). He optimistically looked forward to the assembly as a forum for free debate, where important issues would be openly discussed. To be sure, Imakita Kōsen often hesitated in the face of innovation, whether it be anti-Bakufu activism in the last Tokugawa years, opposition to Meiji government policies, or his own disciples' "modern" impulses.[32] But in contrast to his earlier years, by the 1880s he was responding in a more explicit and deliberate manner to the sociopolitical changes of his time. He still articulated traditional ideas, but within the context of an appreciation of the proposed new political structures. To use Mannheim's language, the Engaku-ji abbot had evolved into a "primitive" conservative.[33] We have noted that Imakita was not a public debater in the style of Ōuchi Seiran or Shimaji Mokurai. But he quietly participated in the construction of conservative ideologies in early Meiji. Imakita's deliberate role in this process is confirmed by his involvement in his followers' activities.

Torio Tokuan: Enlightened Conservative

In early Meiji Japan, as in all epochs and cultures, people shaped one

[31] The rubric "evil teachings" here probably refers to Christian or other Western ideologies, though Imakita does not identify them as such in this essay.

[32] An example of the last phenomenon is Imakita's initially negative reaction to Shaku Sōen's plan to study Western learning at Fukuzawa Yukichi's Keiō Gijuku. See SUZUKI 1992, p. 76.

[33] MANNHEIM uses the term "primitive" to refer to a traditionalist who has just begun to develop a conscious political conservatism (1971, pp. 173–74).

another's worlds of meaning. Their religious views, political positions, daily customs, and pleasures—their very identities were formed and maintained through social interaction with "significant others."[34] As an established Zen master, Imakita exerted influence on his followers, especially on their religious lives—but his disciples affected him in turn. Imakita's regular contact with a particular group of lay practitioners gave him entry into a social and political milieu that he might otherwise have encountered only in a sporadic, superficial manner. A significant difference in the master's life before and after the Restoration was, in fact, this increased involvement in the social and political environment. His new awareness of the world was stimulated by a circle of disciples, friends, and supporters who frequented Engaku-ji in the late 1870s and the 1880s.

Even before Imakita arrived at Engaku-ji, he had attracted some committed lay followers in Yamaguchi Prefecture. At least one of these earlier practitioners, the aforementioned Okunomiya Zōsai, continued his Zen practice under Imakita after the master moved to the Kantō area. In 1875, the same year that Imakita arrived in Tokyo, Okunomiya and another practitioner, Daté Chihiro (Jitoku) 伊達千広(自得) (1802–1877), formed a Zen cultural association (*Ryōmōsha* 両忘社) and placed the group under Imakita's direction.[35] After Okunomiya and Daté passed away and Imakita moved from Tokyo to Kamakura (1877), Imakita's chief lay followers were Torio Koyata (Tokuan), Yamaoka Tetsutarō (Tesshū) 山岡鉄太郎(鉄舟) (1836–1888), and Kawajiri Yoshisuke (Hōkin) 川尻義祐(宝岑) (1842–1910). These men, twenty to thirty years younger than the Zen master, belonged to a transitional generation of Japanese who were educated in Tokugawa times but went on to develop "modern" social identities in the Meiji period. All three became acquainted with Imakita in the mid-1870s and, as time passed, interacted frequently with him and each other. The "Tokyo laymen" (*Tōkyō koji* 東京居士, as they are called in Imakita's biography) functioned as the master's sensors in society at large, experiencing the changing world of Meiji and relaying it back to him—even inviting him into that world, as much as his priestly sensibilities allowed. Indeed, Yamaoka, Torio, and Kawajiri are perhaps best understood as associates rather than "followers" of the abbot. Their early relations

[34] The term "world of meaning" is inspired by Peter BERGER's work on "world-construction" and "world-maintenance," esp. in *The Sacred Canopy*, chs. 1–2. The influence of "significant others" on the formation and maintenance of identity is discussed in BERGER and LUCKMANN 1966 (e.g., pp. 149–52); see also SCHUTZ and LUCKMANN's analysis of the experience of the "Other" (1973, pp. 61–68).

[35] Daté had been an important official in Kishū domain who spent several years in prison after his faction lost control of the domain government in late Tokugawa.

with Imakita were founded in Zen practice under his guidance, but as the years went by, Imakita gradually adopted the position of a mentor who encouraged their independent activities in support of the Dharma. All three men were enthusiastically involved in political or ideological activities in early Meiji.[36] Here I will focus on Torio Koyata, whose life best illustrates the intersection between Buddhist and political cultures during this period.[37]

Son of a Hagi samurai, Torio would become a well-known military man, political figure, educator, and writer in the Meiji period. He fought, at the age of sixteen, alongside the domain riflemen at Shimonoseki when Chōshū shelled U.S. and French ships in 1863, and distinguished himself as a troop commander in various skirmishes against the shogunate during its last years. His unit of twenty men, called Torio-tai, became the new Meiji government's advance guard in the 1868 pacification of rebellious shogunal troops. Torio later recalled that, after the Restoration, he began to read Confucian books but disagreed with the ideas he found in them about "good and evil" and "human nature and principles." Concluding that neither Confucius nor Buddha understood the mysteries of the universe, he determined to find his own answers to these problems. From about 1869 to 1875 he accordingly "tried to realize what his own mind was." He gave up book reading and practiced intensive contemplation, allegedly without sleeping for ten or twenty days at a stretch (TORIO 1884, p. 299b). In the meantime, Torio met Mutsu Munemitsu 陸奥宗光 (1844–1897), struck up a warm friendship with him, and in 1870 began to study Zen under the guidance of Mutsu's father, the aforementioned Daté Jitoku.[38] "Old man Daté Jitoku was a man versed in the principles of Zen, and I listened to his counsel frequently. I began to think that what I was looking for was in the Zen school of Buddhism" (TORIO 1884, p. 299b).

[36] There are a number of popular biographies of Yamaoka available: ŌMORI 1981 and 1993, and YOUNG 1984. None of these works analyze his political life in the 1870s and 1880s in detail, however. The chief source for Kawajiri's life is the block-print edition of his biography, compiled by HAYANO 1911. Also see IZUYAMA 1971.

[37] Torio's original name was Nakamura Hōsuke 中村鳳輔; he adopted the name Torio Koyata as a young man and began using the name Tokuan after he became involved in Zen practice.

[38] Daté practiced Zen under Rinzai master Ekkei Shuken 越渓守謙 (1810–1884). (See OGISU 1981, pp. 107–109, for an anecdote about Daté complaining to Ogino Dokuon about the violent treatment Daté received from Ekkei.) Ekkei's disciple Sakagami Shinjō 坂上真浄 (1842–1914) reports that in 1872 Daté asked Ekkei to open a Zen training center in Tokyo (SAKAGAMI 1915, p. 143). He was not able to persuade Ekkei to move, but in 1875 Daté himself moved to Tokyo, connected with Imakita Kōsen, and, as mentioned above, cofounded Ryōmōsha. Concerning Torio's stormy relationship with Daté's son Mutsu, who later became Foreign Minister, see SODA 1934, pp. 29–30; 48–49. For a concise account of Mutsu's career in English, see JANSEN 1970.

Torio was probably introduced to Imakita Kōsen in the mid-1870s, perhaps by Daté. Not one to be modest, TORIO later recalled the meeting: "Master [Imakita] said, 'What is the sound of one hand clapping?' I presented my view at once. Master praised me, saying, "You are the 'One-Night Enlightenment' of my school" (1884, p. 299b).[39] Imakita later wrote to Torio (in 1876 or early 1877) about the latter's progress in his Zen cultivation, particularly his practice of a meditative exercise called "White Bone Contemplation" (*hakkotsu kan* 白骨観). He advises Torio to "rid yourself of the mentality you have had until now and immediately aspire to cure your White Bone illness by means of the White Bone medicine that I imparted to you." In his letter the master seems to verify Torio's positive rendition of their first encounter, for he says: "I remember the good karmic conditions of our unexpected meeting."[40] After this first, avowedly successful meeting with Imakita, Torio continued his efforts to perfect his understanding. In the winter of the same year, he was talking with a guest when he suddenly comprehended, "as if the bottom had dropped off a bucket."[41] Torio was receiving Ogino Dokuon's guidance during this period as well; he reportedly presented his insight to Dokuon and was told: "When I hear your words, it gives me goose bumps" (TORIO 1884, p. 299b).

Suzuki characterizes the general as the most idiosyncratic and unpredictable of Imakita's lay disciples. "He was strong-willed and had a crusty, stubborn personality" (SUZUKI 1992, p. 66).[42] Torio was indeed impulsive and outspoken in his youth; he mellowed a bit with

[39] "One-Night Enlightenment," *isshukkaku* 一宿覚, refers to Xuan-jue 玄覚 (675–713), whose understanding was allegedly approved by Hui-neng during his first meeting with the patriarch.

[40] The letter is contained in *Sōryō kōroku*, Imakita Kōsen's collected Chinese writings, (SK 2:34b). Suzuki, however, speculates that the "unexpected meeting" refers to another incident. According to one anecdote, during a visit to Imakita, possibly in the company of Yamaoka Tesshū, Torio made some provocative statements about Zen, whereupon Imakita retorted, "What is that mind of yours that speaks so noisily?" Without missing a beat, Torio lifted the staff (*nyoi* 如意) he was holding and flung it in front of Imakita. The master calmly picked it up, saying, "Isn't this a staff? Just what I need!" At that Torio was stymied. Imakita told Torio he would keep the staff for him until Torio "understood" the point. Suzuki guesses that Imakita may have instructed Torio in the White Bone Contemplation at this time (1992, p. 65). I am more inclined to think that Imakita and Torio had at least been introduced earlier, and that the anecdote recounts, not their first meeting, but a slightly later encounter between the master and disciple, after Torio had formally requested Imakita's guidance.

[41] TORIO says this episode took place in "the same year" that he met Imakita, but he does not specify which year (1884, p. 299b).

[42] SUZUKI adds that Torio loved pranks; on one occasion he set his dog on Yamaoka Tesshū's friend, the priest of Kokutai-ji 国泰寺, Matsuo Gikaku (Essō) 松尾義格 (越叟) (1837–1884), apparently to test his equanimity (1992, p. 68).

age, but apparently continued to speak his mind, not only among his Zen acquaintances but also in high-level political circles. During the same period that Torio became interested in Zen, he began to formulate his views about national affairs; in 1875 he wrote *Kokusei ingaron* 国勢因果論 [Discussion of the causes and effects of the national condition], in which he reflects on the events of the Restoration and first Meiji years (SODA 1934, p. 22). Meanwhile, he was appointed to the new Ministry of Military Affairs (Hyōbushō 兵部省) and quickly rose through a succession of appointments to become (in 1876) a general of the second rank and chief of army staff. During the Seinan War of 1877, Torio was a central figure in the planning of maneuvers against Saigō Takamori's troops. But by early 1878, according to his own account, he felt he had fulfilled his mission on the battlefield and privately decided to resign his military commission. He hung on until 1880, by which time he had risen to the position of general in the Imperial Guard. Torio later explained:

> At that time, Minister of the Right Iwakura [Tomomi] secretly summoned me and cordially remarked, "I hear you have an opinion about current national affairs; I would like to hear it." I omit my theory here, but that theory was rejected because of the powerful political figures of the time. I truly could not bear the outrage, and from that time on I did not have the heart to devote myself again to national affairs. (SODA 1934, p. 33)

Torio's initial decision to retire may have been related to the reorganization of the army by government leaders Yamagata Aritomo 山県有朋 (1838–1922) and Katsura Tarō 桂 太郎 (1848–1913) in 1878. Along with other prominent generals such as Tani Kanjō 谷 干城 (1837–1911), Torio was opposed to the oligarchs' interference in army affairs. Both Tani and Torio had disagreed with Yamagata's implementation of universal conscription in 1873 (HACKETT 1971, p. 63). Now Yamagata and Katsura had created a new body called the "General Staff," which was directly responsible to the emperor and therefore independent of both the army minister and the Council of State (HACKETT 1971, pp. 82–83). In response to this and other changes, Generals Miura Gorō 三浦梧楼 (1847–1926), Soga Sukenori 曽我祐準 (1844–1935), Tani, and Torio all retired from active duty beginning in the late 1870s—they became known as the four "Discontented Generals." All four became leading figures in *kokusui hozon shugi* 国粋保存主義 [Movement for the preservation of the national essence] (TETERS 1962, p. 367). The members of this movement opposed the Westernization policy of the Meiji government and, especially, its approach to revising the unequal treaties.

Torio was also a member of the Council of Elder Statesmen (Genrō-in), a government advisory body founded in 1875. In that capacity he helped produce two versions of a national constitution, which the emperor had commissioned the Council to draft in 1876. Both drafts (submitted in 1879 and 1880) were opposed by oligarchs Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909) and Iwakura Tomomi 岩倉具視 (1825–1883). The Council's versions of the constitution gave the proposed national diet much greater power vis-à-vis the emperor than what was eventually allowed in the Meiji Constitution. The Council's drafts also stipulated the establishment of elective assemblies in each prefecture and village, whereas the Meiji Constitution did not guarantee such mechanisms of local self-government.[43]

The Council members' efforts to broaden the government's bases of power were inspired by the *kokusuishugi* 国粋主義 notion that neither the cabinet nor the political parties should interfere in the relationship between the emperor and the people. In this view, the "national essence" was not identified with the imperial institution or even with the emperor himself—rather, it was constituted by the "peculiar and even mystic relationship between emperor and people" (Teters 1962, p. 361). The emperor was not to be "mediated" (or controlled) by any single individual or group; instead, the proposed assembly, representing the entire people of Japan, would have a direct relationship with him.

Torio fought heroically in the Council of Elder Statesmen to increase the powers of the proposed diet. The rejection he experienced at the hands of Iwakura and the aforementioned "powerful political figures" may have been due not only to his disagreement with army reforms but also to his strong advocacy of the more representative governmental structure proposed by the Council. Despite Torio's insinuation that he lost heart for "national affairs" in 1880, the general did not give up his aggressive political efforts. The following year he and the other generals formed a group called Getsuyōkai 月曜会 and began publicly opposing the policies of Itō Hirobumi and Yamagata Aritomo. In the fall of that year, they sent a memorial to the emperor that vigorously argued against the concentration of all power (legislative, judicial, and executive) in the cabinet.[44] They proposed to remedy this imbalance by giving the Council of Elder Statesmen the power to pass laws independently of the executive officials in the cabinet; the Council's legislative proposals would require only the approval of the

[43] For a detailed discussion of the differences between the Council's versions and the one that was ultimately adopted, see Teters 1962, pp. 362–66.

[44] The text of the memorial is contained in Hirao 1981, pp. 502–3.

emperor. They also urged that the Council itself be made more representative by adding delegates to it from the local assemblies (TETERS 1962, pp. 368–69).

Torio and the other three generals are usually called "conservative," partly because they opposed the emerging "liberal" parties of the time.[45] But the thrust of their 1881 memorial was relatively progressive, insofar as it called for a more broad-based national political structure than that envisioned by the oligarchy. The generals' position was inspired by purported Japanese "traditions" (such as the notion of a direct relationship between the emperor and the people), but this traditionalist emphasis was now part of a new synthesis that included the "liberal" notion of popular representation.[46] Torio's brand of "conservatism," then, invites further scrutiny. It was not an attempt either to preserve the status quo (the oligarchy) or to reinstate a past model of government. Torio opposed the party activities associated with the people's rights movement in the 1880s, but he shared with its members and with others, including tacit conservatives like Imakita Kōsen, the vision of a more open, representative political order.

An important transition took place in Torio's life during the early 1880s. He began to engage in forms of public activism that united his political views with his Buddhist commitment. During the same period that Torio was initiating ideological movements and fighting for a representative legislature, he was also deeply involved in the affairs of the Engaku-ji community. Now a committed *koji*, he gave generously to various Engaku-ji fund-raising projects and seems also to have recruited lay practitioners for Imakita's Zen program.[47] He became known for his writings about Buddhism, among other topics; one of his more noted works, *Butsudō honron* 仏道本論 [Fundamental discourses on the Buddhist Way] was published in 1885. Torio also played the role of advisor to younger members of the Engaku-ji circle; in particular, he acted as a mentor to Shaku Sōen during Imakita's late years. But Torio was perhaps most skilled in persuading fellow Rinzai practitioners, both monastic and lay, to participate in larger ideological campaigns.

[45] That is, the "Liberal Party" (Jiyūtō) and the "Constitutional Progressive Party" (Rikken Kaishintō), headed by Itagaki Taisuke 板垣退助 (1837–1919) and Ōkuma Shigenobu 大隈重信 (1838–1922), respectively.

[46] The synthesis was not unique—advocates of the popular rights campaign, from its earliest phases, also argued for broader representation by invoking the idea of a special unity between the imperial will and the popular will (VLASTOS 1989, p. 403).

[47] At least two laymen who practiced under Imakita in the late 1880s resided with Torio in Tokyo (both originated in Hagi, like Torio). They are listed in Imakita's 1885 lay register, *Sōryōkutsu ejō koji zenshi meishi* 蒼龍窟会上居士禅子名刺 [Names of laymen and laywomen of the assembly of Blue Dragon Grotto], which is reproduced in *Kamakura-shi shi: Kindai shiryō hen daiichi*, pp. 390–401.

In February 1884 Yamaoka and Torio organized a Buddhist group called Myōdō Kyōkai 明道協会 [Society for Illuminating the Way]. Imakita Kōsen agreed to speak once a month to the members, beginning with an inaugural sermon on the *Blue Cliff Record* (*Hekigan roku* 碧巌録) (SKN, p. 21a). The group aimed to promote Japanese religious and moral culture under the rubric of a nonsectarian Buddhism. In this regard, it was part of a general Meiji trend—Ikeda Eishun has identified over two hundred and twenty pan-Buddhist groups that were founded from 1882 to 1887 (IKEDA 1994, p. 95). Myōdō Kyōkai alone instituted thirty-three centers and branches (located in eleven prefectures) during its founding year.[48]

Torio later commented that by the time he reached the age of thirty-seven (1883, by Japanese reckoning), he had concluded that the Buddha's teaching was nothing other than fulfilling the "Four Obligations" and enacting the "Way of the Ten Good [Precepts]" (TORIO 1884, pp. 299a–300a).[49] The next year he proceeded to advocate this very formulation through his new group. In this respect, too, Myōdō Kyōkai was unexceptional; several other Buddhist groups founded in the 1870s and 1880s also focussed their messages on the importance of repaying the Four Obligations and following the Ten Precepts. The latter concept, popularized in the Tokugawa period by the Shingon Ritsu monk Jiun Sonja 慈雲尊者 (1718–1805), was well known in early Meiji Buddhist circles; according to Ikeda, Jiun's *Jūzen hōgo* 十善法語 [Dharma talks on the Ten Precepts] was widely used as a teaching text (IKEDA 1994, p. 126).[50] In March 1885, Myōdō Kyōkai members in Tokyo unanimously decided that their aim in giving Buddhist talks would be, in fact, "to spread [the teachings of] the Four Obligations and the Ten Precepts and to encourage the practice of religious discipline for karmic purification." Local branches echoed the same aspirations and followed Tokyo in advocating the monastic reforms proposed by Fukuda Gyōkai (IKEDA 1994, p. 60).[51]

[48] IKEDA lists the various locations announced in the journal *Meikyō shinshi* (1994, pp. 113–15). The local branches of Myōdō Kyōkai kept in close touch with their headquarters and propagated the same or similar ideas. Another example of this type of group is Wakeikai, associated with Ōuchi Seiran, pp. 122–23.

[49] The Four Obligations, *shion* 四恩, are owed to one's parents, the ruler of one's country, all sentient beings, and the Three Treasures (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha). The Ten Precepts are prohibitions against killing, stealing, adultery, lying, frivolous language, slander, equivocation, greed, anger, and wrong views (as translated by WATT 1984, p. 200).

[50] IKEDA also detects Jiun's influence on Torio himself, for example, on Torio's concept of kami as expressed in the latter's *Shinsei tetsugaku mushinron* 真正哲学無神論 [Authentic philosophical atheism] (1994, pp. 59–60).

[51] The Kanazawa branch, for example, explicitly refused membership to clerics who engaged in *nikujiki saitai*, and stipulated that lay practitioners who lectured on Buddhism

During the 1870s and 1880s, as Kenneth Pyle remarks, "the belief that the course of Western civilization represented the universal path of man's progress was so pervasive that the term *bunmei* (civilization) was often used as a synonym for *seiyō bunmei* (Western civilization)." But many, notably *kokusuishugi* activists, wanted to redefine these key terms—to change people's very understanding of what it meant to be "civilized" (PYLE 1969, p. 148). Torio and his Society for Illuminating the Way eagerly joined in this campaign to reeducate the people—though from a Buddhist perspective. Torio's commentary on the group's founding principles, *Myōdō Kyōkai yōryō kaisetsu* 明道協会要領解説 [An explanation of the essentials of the Society for Illuminating the Way], leaves no doubt that the Society viewed participation in the campaign as both a national and religious duty.[52] In the commentary, "protecting the nation" is virtually identified with "enlightening the nation" and "illuminating the Way." The Buddhist Way had to be exposed to the public—if left to lapse into obscurity, the Way (and by implication, Japan) would become irrelevant and powerless. Society members therefore were expected to preach *for the sake of the nation.*[53] We cannot delve into a detailed analysis of the group's ideology here, but it is worth noting at this juncture that Myōdō Kyōkai, founded by two of the best-known lay Zen practitioners of the time and sanctioned by their prominent Zen master, promoted a nationalistic ideology articulated in terms of basic Buddhist tenets. Its leaders made no attempt to present distinctive Zen Buddhist ideas or practices as particularly suited to the ideological needs of the time.

A year after the establishment of Myōdō Kyōkai, Torio was dispatched to Europe as a representative of the National Defense Council (Kokubō kaigi 国防会議). In 1887, like other Meiji citizens who travelled abroad, he returned more convinced than ever of the value of Japanese culture. He spoke out more vociferously against Westernizing trends in Japanese society. By now he had developed a reputation for his forthright manner, a quality that proved useful throughout his

were to have received the Bodhisattva precepts. The implication of the former policy was that Jōdo Shin clergy could not join (IKEDA 1994, p. 127).

[52] The work was published on 5 April 1884. See TORIO 1884.

[53] In fact, Myōdō Kyōkai's founding principles were originally called *Gokoku kyōkai kiyaku* 護国協会規約, "Rules of the Society for Protecting the Nation." The term *gokoku* reportedly provoked negative reactions from observers, so *gokoku* was changed to *myōdō* 明道, or "illuminating the Way." Myōdō Kyōkai attempted to appeal to a wide range of individuals and groups. Some may have felt that the term *gokoku*, "protecting the nation," was politically charged, or that the society should cultivate a more philosophical or educational image. Even those who approved of Myōdō Kyōkai's aim of rallying Buddhist defenses against Western ideology may not have wanted that aim to define the society's public image.

political career.[54] The same year, the government's efforts (led by Inoue Kaoru 井上 馨, 1836–1915) to revise the unequal treaties engendered a new wave of protests from both the political parties and the *kokusuishugi* circle. Tani Kanjō, who had also recently toured Europe in his capacity as Minister of Commerce and Agriculture, submitted his resignation in June and attacked the government's treaty revision plan, which he regarded as a humiliating submission to foreign demands and an affront to Japan's national integrity. In late 1887 the opposition to Inoue's revision strategy by both liberals and *kokusuishugi* advocates grew increasingly agitated; demands for freedom of speech and reduction of the land tax also became strident. The government responded by issuing the Peace Preservation Law, which further restricted public assembly and banned protest leaders from Tokyo.[55]

During this crisis, according to later comments by Itagaki Taisuke, leader of the Liberal Party, "among the members of the Genrōin, Torio Koyata [and several others]...listened to what the representatives [of the opposition] said and often had a tendency to support the popular will."[56] Here again, we find Torio behaving not according to the stereotype of a narrow, rigid conservative, but as someone who appreciated the notion (considered "progressive" in this context) that all human beings have a right to political representation. In the same year (1887), Torio circulated a secret memorandum in which he argued for radical expansion of the powers of the Council of Elders. He advocated that legislation be entirely the responsibility of the Council and the emperor; the cabinet members could express their views on proposed legislation, but they would not have the power to interfere in the legislative process (Teters 1962, pp. 373–74).

To what extent did Torio genuinely value the principle of representative government? Was Torio's battle for more broad-based political structures simply a way of redressing his own exclusion from the center of political power (as it was for some "liberal" leaders)? After all, Torio had been a Chōshū samurai who distinguished himself in fighting for the imperial cause, but was not allowed into the inner circle of Chōshū and Satsuma men who dominated the Meiji government. Yet it would be overly facile to conclude that Torio's radical appeal for the independence of the Council of Elders simply derived from jealousy

[54] For example, Mori relates an anecdote about Torio wrangling with Itō Hirobumi over the idea of dividing the Korean peninsula between Japan and Russia in the period leading up to the Russo-Japanese war (1965, 1: 127–28).

[55] See Teters 1962, pp. 371–72 and Pyle 1965, pp. 102–5, esp. on Tani's role.

[56] Cited in Teters 1962, p. 373 (I have made orthographic changes).

of the oligarchs. His 1887 memorandum went further, as Barbara Teters explains:

> How did Torio hope that the Genrōin would exercise the extraordinary powers he proposed for it? This opponent of the party movement as well as of the hanbatsu, this Confucianist, this leader of the National Essence Movement [*kokusuishugi*], in short, this most conservative member of the hanbatsu's non-party opposition, proposed that, "The assembly regulations should be revised, and *all of the people* should be free to express their opinions publicly on political matters," and, moreover, "The newspaper regulations should be revised, and the gates of public discussion opened." (TETERS 1962, p. 374)[57]

The Meiji government had steadily clamped down on freedoms of speech and public assembly during the 1870s and 1880s. In reaction to the latest restrictions, Torio now voiced his support of the right of representation and other civil liberties more vehemently than ever. His latest proposals did not meet with any more success than his earlier ones; indeed, in April 1888 Itō Hirobumi moved to have the Council of Elders abolished.[58] But the government's version of the constitution was sent to the newly-established Privy Council, of which Torio was also a member. There he fought just as fiercely to modify the government draft as he had fought for his earlier proposals in the Council of Elders. Most of his efforts in the Privy Council failed, but he did win the future diet the power to initiate legislation (TETERS 1962, p. 367).

The period from mid-1887 to 1889 was another critical phase in Torio's career, a time when he reached new heights of ideological activism in both religious and political circles. Myōdō Kyōkai was still active, but Torio and others apparently felt the need for a more broadly-based movement. Just after the political crisis of late 1887, in January of the next year, Torio and several other members of the Engaku-ji circle founded Dai Nihon Kokkyō Daidōsha 大日本国教大道社 [Society of the Great Way of the Great Japanese National Teaching]. The members of this overtly nationalistic association, which aspired to be even more "universal" than the earlier pan-Buddhist Myōdō Kyōkai, claimed that the synthesis of Shinto, Confucian, and Buddhist ideas was the true creed of the Japanese people.[59]

[57] Emphasis, material in brackets, and orthographic modifications added.

[58] It was not actually dismantled until October of 1890, and its members continued to oppose the government's legislative proposals until the very end of the Council's existence. Many of its former members, like Torio, became members of the House of Peers and continued their struggle against the *hanbatsu* 藩閥 there (TETERS 1962, p. 377).

[59] See GLUCK 1985, p. 22, for a quotation to this effect from the group's publication,

And, like other religiously oriented nationalistic groups that began to emerge in the late 1880s, Daidōsha was explicitly anti-Christian.[60]

Judging from the overlap in personnel, Daidōsha seems to have been a spin-off of Myōdō Kyōkai. Yamaoka and another layman, Honjō Munetake (Jōan) 本荘宗武 (成庵) (1846–1893), sponsored the founding of Daidōsha and invited Torio to head it. Torio, who by this time ran various educational programs of his own, appointed one of his students, the former Shinto priest Kawai Kiyomaru 川合清丸 (1848–1917), editor-in-chief of the new group's journal, *Daidō sōshi* 大道叢誌. Kawai doubled as an administrator of Myōdō Kyōkai, which he had joined in 1886. Imakita's close disciple and Dharma successor, Kawajiri Hōkin, was also active in Daidōsha. Indeed, with Daidōsha we come full circle back to Engaku-ji, for Imakita himself participated in the group in some capacity. By 1889 the Zen master's tacit conservatism had evidently become more explicit (and more nationalistic). He wrote an essay in celebration of Daidōsha's progress in which he praises Kawai's literary skills and affirms the editor's critical view of Christianity (SK 3:30a–31a).

Torio's organizational impulses were not confined to religious-ideological groups. In the same year that he took charge of Daidōsha (1888), the general also created a political association, Hoshu Chūsei Tō 保守中正党 (perhaps best translated by Teters as the "Impartial Conservative Group"). In 1889, the group began publication of a journal called *Hoshu shinron* 保守新論 [The new conservatism].[61] Thus, while Myōdō Kyōkai and Daidōsha promulgated Torio's and his companions' religious and moral vision for Japan, his Impartial Conservative Group lobbied for the political implications of that vision. Through all these organizations, Torio energetically promoted the view that tra-

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Daidō sōshi 大道叢誌. SUZUKI (1992, p. 64) later took a dim view of Daidōsha, dismissing it as an indistinctive "syncretism" much like "the beliefs of the Japanese people before the Restoration" (which he apparently regarded as rather unenlightened).

[60] A better-known Buddhist association of this ilk was Sonnō Hōbutsu Daidōdan 尊皇奉仏大同団 (Great association for revering the Emperor and venerating the Buddha), created in 1889 by Ōuchi Seiran and others. Seikyōsha 政教社 (Association of politics and religion), founded in 1887, became the chief organ of the *kokusuishugi* movement and the publisher of the well-known journal *Nihonjin*. Its original sponsors included such Buddhist leaders as Shimaji Mokurai and Inoue Enryō (KASHIWAHARA 1990, p. 62). PYLE (1969) includes detailed discussions of the ideas of some leading Seikyōsha members. See also THELLE (1987, esp. pp. 101–9) for a review of some of these nationalist Buddhist groups. Donald SHIVELY (1971) gives a succinct summary of the "nativist" movements of this period in their political context. Winston DAVIS (1992, pp. 161–70) offers a typology of Meiji Buddhist movements.

[61] Similarly, in 1888 the *kokusuishugi*-inspired journal *Nihonjin* began publication; *Nihon* followed early in 1889. The latter received strong financial backing from Tani Kanjō (PYLE 1969, p. 93).

ditional Japanese values were the true "national teaching" (*kokkyō*). But during the same period in which these groups appeared, as we have seen, Torio was strenuously fighting for implementation of political structures that guaranteed freedoms of representation and speech—freedoms that might ultimately diminish the influence of his favorite moral and religious conceptions.

Concluding Reflections

What can we infer from the ideas and actions of Imakita Kōsen and Torio Koyata about the role of Japanese Zen Buddhists in early Meiji political debates? Imakita's political leanings are difficult to discern. The Zen master maintained a reserved presence in his sociopolitical environment, both locally and nationally. However, Imakita was an intelligent, widely-read man, who had numerous acquaintances in the political sphere. After the establishment of a national assembly was announced in 1881, the Zen abbot became more involved in political debates, though always in a discreet manner. In "Monastic Preparation," he implicitly criticized the government's interference in Buddhist affairs. By 1889, when Imakita gave his blessing to Daidōsha, he was openly involved in a conservative ideological campaign to defend Japanese values against Western and Christian influences. In short, Imakita underwent a process of political sensitization—he moved from an unarticulated traditionalism to identification with specific conservative and nationalistic views.

One cannot come to firm conclusions about the mode of thought of a social group in a particular historical context on the basis of a study of one or two individuals. However, Imakita's growing political alertness seems representative of the evolution in consciousness of other Zen monastic leaders whose lives spanned the pre- and post-Restoration decades. They moved from a habit of accepting the Tokugawa status quo to a mentality of conscious engagement in the Meiji political process. For the most part, however, the contribution of Rinzai clergy to this political process was rather subdued. Their approach was consistent with the political style of past Rinzai leaders, who since medieval times had made their influence felt through followers in the upper levels of Japanese society and government, rather than by personally engaging in public debate or controversy. Imakita thus remained politically "invisible" even while sanctioning the very visible political activities of his lay followers.[62]

[62] Imakita's muted political posture could also be related to growing public sentiment against clerical participation in political activities during the 1880s. I am indebted to

Winston DAVIS has remarked about Meiji Buddhist movements that "the more distance lay movements put between themselves and the temples, the more progressive they seemed to become." He cites Myōdō Kyōkai as an example of a "relatively progressive movement," in contrast to the more conservative "temple-based" Buddhism of the time (1992, pp. 166–67; 170–71). I have referred to the Engaku-ji community as a "circle," however, precisely because of the sociopolitical uniformity displayed by its members—both monastic and lay. Although Torio as an individual illustrates a complexity of political influences, the foundational teachings of Myōdō Kyōkai (not to mention Daidō-sha) were surely as conservative (and nationalistic) as the views of Imakita Kōsen, who gave both groups his blessing. Politically, the Engaku-ji circle was of one piece. The Zen master at its center adopted the role of "silence and ambiguity," while his *koji* took on the task of creating and utilizing public channels for Buddhist political sentiments.[63] Even in religious, moral, and intellectual matters, the distinction between the concerns of Zen clerical leaders and committed lay practitioners was not sharply pronounced at this time. Later, Suzuki and other twentieth-century lay thinkers may well have "severed Zen's links to traditional Buddhist soteriological, cosmological, and ethical concerns," as Robert Sharf suggests, but early Meiji lay practitioners such as Torio, Yamaoka, and Kawajiri vigorously promoted those very concerns (SHARF 1994, p. 43). The shift in emphasis from monastic to lay practice was not necessarily a key factor in the emergence of Suzuki's so-called "free-floating Zen."

The Engaku-ji companions thus joined with other Buddhists in publicizing their traditional religious beliefs along with conservative and nationalistic views. We have seen, however, that the political views of these figures do not always fit neatly into conventional categories of "conservative" or "liberal." Tamamuro Taijō notes that Torio's political position was conservative, but he "enunciated the importance of human rights, and argued for human rights as well as for national rights" (TAMAMURO 1980, p. 34).[64] As Barbara Teters argues, Torio confounds our tendency to stereotype the individuals who opposed Westernizing

Richard Jaffe for this observation and a reference to Haga Shōji, who suggests that the emergence of political-type religious movements such as Sonnō Hōbutsu Daidōdan in the late 1880s (which was perceived as working against separation of religion and state), and the passage of the election law for the lower house (*Shūgiin giin senkyo hō*), which deprived Buddhist clergy of the right to stand for election, provoked debate on both sides of the issue (HAGA 1994, pp. 222–23).

[63] See DAVIS's perceptive remarks on silence and ambiguity, which he identifies as "the survival tactics of institutional religion" (1992, pp. 180–81).

[64] "National rights" (*kokken*) has the connotation of national power or standing vis-à-vis the international world.

trends in early Meiji Japan as "conservative" without considering the complexities of their thought.[65] The same tendency to ignore diversity within the conservative movement existed in Meiji society itself.[66] Torio himself was quite aware of the simplistic and negative stereotyping of conservatism in his day. He took pains to point out that his conservatism was not a stifling traditionalism: "The world often takes conservatism (*hoshu*) to mean opposing the principle of the development of living things and conserving the old condition of everything in the nation, and [thus] unreasonably criticizes and rejects it" (TORIO 1934, p. 3). For Torio, what needed to be "conserved," "preserved," and "protected" was the nation and the Way—not necessarily old ways of life. And preserving the Way meant propagating the view that Japan was a Buddha-land created by divine beings and ordered by traditional ethical values.

It is in light of this fundamental premise that we must understand Torio's support of the right of political representation. From the general's perspective, the right karmic conditions in Japan could only be maintained through conformity with particular moral and religious ideals (especially the divine continuity of the imperial lineage, the Ten Precepts, the Four Obligations, and the corollary values of loyalty and filial piety). To Torio, strict application of these ideals—the "Enlightened Way"—mandated a direct relationship between the emperor and the Japanese people. In order to preserve the nation and the Way, Japanese citizens needed to preserve their access to the emperor. To the general, usurpation of this access by either the Meiji oligarchs or the liberal party leaders was not only politically, but also religiously and morally, wrong. Torio therefore pushed for representative government because of his "traditionalist" views. His insistence on the right of representation did not derive from "democratic" impulses—it was inspired by his religious commitment to restore the near-mystical unity of "the people" and the emperor (and perhaps, on some level, by his personal desire to gain access to power). With these

[65] TETERS concludes:

> It is ... remarkable that the most prominent of the Genrō-in members who struggled for legislative power independent of the hanbatsu-dominated executive was General Torio Koyata, one of the central figures of the National Essence movement, unceasing opponent of the political parties and of party government, and creator of the strongly Confucian journal with the title *Hoshu Shinron.* (1962, p. 378)

However, Teters oversimplifies in her repeated identification of Torio as "Confucian" or "Confucianist." As we have seen, despite the general's affirmation of selected Confucian and Shinto ideas, his religious framework was fundamentally Buddhist.

[66] PYLE (1969, pp. 67, 69) notes the frustration of *kokusuishugi* advocates who were labeled as conservative or reactionary in spite of their avowedly reformist agenda.

qualifications we can conclude that Torio allowed certain "progressive" ideas to influence his traditional framework. In his own idiosyncratic way, he illustrates Mannheim's conception of the political conservative who synthesizes elements of tradition and innovation. He was surely aware that "liberal" calls for representative political institutions were inspired in part by Western democratic ideals.[67] Torio criticized Western influences in some contexts, but in the final analysis he was willing to adopt elements of Western culture that he felt would benefit the Buddha-land.

But where is the Zen in all this? Did Zen Buddhist ideas or practices play a distinctive role in the political discourse or activism of early Meiji practitioners? Robert Sharf's characterization of Japanese "Zen nationalism" as the "use of Zen to provide a rationale for Japanese claims to uniqueness and cultural supremacy" evidently refers narrowly to the historical context of prewar Japan (SHARF 1994, p.46).[68] "Zen" in the sense of a distinctive idea, practice, or institution was not used in this way in earlier Meiji political discourse. The ideological movements initiated by Zen practitioners during this time merely illustrate the widespread tendency among Meiji citizens to reformulate certain aspects of their "traditional" culture as enduring values suited to Japan as it took its place in the modern world. For members of the Engaku-ji circle, the central repository of these essential cultural elements was a generalized Mahayana Buddhism, judiciously reinforced by Confucian and Shinto ideas. Despite the prominent role of Zen in the lives of its founding members, Daidōsha, like Myōdō Kyōkai, did not propagate an identifiable "Zen nationalism." In the 1880s, Zen Buddhists still justified their arguments for Japanese uniqueness by elaborating the idea of the divine origin of Japan by means of fundamental Buddhist teachings such as the Ten Precepts. In early Meiji, Zen nationalism was simply Buddhist nationalism.

In the final analysis, we need to consider not only the thought but also the social function of Meiji Zen in order to clarify the distinctive contribution of this tradition to the political culture of modern Japan. In its new lay manifestation, Engaku-ji Zen was particularly congenial to certain sectors of Japanese society. During the last years of Imakita's life, his lay following reached a scale and level of systemization that

[67] For the Western sources of early popular rights thought, see VLASTOS 1989, e.g., pp. 405, 407.

[68] He prefaces the characterization quoted above by saying that "the notion of Zen as the foundation for Japanese moral, aesthetic, and spiritual superiority emerged full force in the 1930s, just as the Japanese were preparing for imperial expansion in East and Southeast Asia."

was unknown in Rinzai monasteries during the Tokugawa period.[69] By the late 1880s a new generation of educated young people had begun to practice regularly under Imakita.[70] Like the abbot's older followers (Okunomiya, Daté, Yamaoka, Torio, and Kawajiri), these young practitioners interacted with one another in diverse social contexts. Several were Tokyo Imperial University students and graduates.[71] The Engaku-ji program also attracted numerous young men associated with the navy or army (especially military academy students) and students from other secondary schools and universities in the Kantō area, including some who had studied abroad. Many practitioners belonged to former samurai families; several were school teachers or newspaper reporters. Imakita's practice also included a significant contingent of female lay practitioners (*zenshi* 禪子), most of whom identify themselves in his lay register as mothers, wives, or sisters of male participants. Family and social connections clearly reinforced the group nature of this rather elite lay movement.

We can confirm the identity only of the minority of persons who, because of the importance of their position or connections, are mentioned in a source other than the register itself. Consequently, our picture of the Engaku-ji lay circle in the late 1880s and early 1890s may be skewed. Nevertheless, it is evident that the Engaku-ji program attracted a privileged group of people who commuted from their workplaces, schools, or homes, mostly in the capital. Some of these practitioners were probably members of an older generation who enjoyed practicing Buddhism in Kamakura, which Tokyoites viewed as both a resort and a center of traditional religious culture. But a great number of new practitioners were enterprising young people who went on to become prominent members of Japanese society and, in some cases (Suzuki and Shaku Sōkatsu 釈 宗活, 1870–1954), to spread Zen Buddhism in the West. The later social and political contributions

[69] This surge in the lay following, notably during the late 1880s and early 1890s, was related to a number of factors, including such mundane events as the opening in 1890 of a railway line between Kamakura and Tokyo (SUZUKI 1986, p. 19). Until that time, the cost of transportation to Kamakura from Tokyo probably limited the number of urban practitioners who were able to frequent Engaku-ji on a regular basis. Another Engaku-ji regular, Hōjō Tokiyuki, reports that in 1889 it took two hours by boat from Tokyo (Shinbashi) to Kamakura (1931, p. 346b). (My thanks to Michiko Yusa for providing me with copies of excerpts from this text.) But Suzuki walked all night (for lack of funds?) from Tokyo to Kamakura when he first went to practice Zen there in 1891. See INOUE 1989, p. 112.

[70] The information in this paragraph is gleaned from the manuscript of Imakita Kōsen's lay register, held in the Tōkeiji collection in Kamakura, called *Sōryōkutsu ejō koji zenshi meishi.* The register was initiated in 1885, but the entries extend over a number of years, through at least part of 1891 (see IMAKITA 1885).

[71] See INOUE and ZEN BUNKA KENKYŪSHO 1989, p. 112, n.4.

of this Zen Buddhist intelligentsia is beyond the scope of this paper. However, we can surmise that Zen practice at Engaku-ji constituted a common bond for these promising youths: as government officials, bankers, educators, military leaders, philosophers, and novelists, they brought a common religious and moral foundation with them into the upper levels of twentieth-century Japanese society. Further research into the accomplishments of these and other lay practitioners will undoubtedly illuminate the real contribution of Zen Buddhism to the sociopolitical world of modern Japan.

ABBREVIATIONS

KKS *Kanagawa-ken shi* 神奈川県史. *Shiryō hen* 資料編 13. *Kindai, Gendai* 近代現代 3: *Shakai* 社会. Kanagawa-ken Shi Henshūshitsu 神奈川県史編集室, ed. Yokohama: Kanagawa-ken, 1977.

SK *Sōryō kōroku* 蒼龍広録. Imakita Kōsen (Shaku Sōen 釋 宗演, ed.), 5 kan. Tokyo. Block-print edition, 1892.

SKN *Sōryōkutsu nenpu* 蒼龍窟年譜. Shaku Sōen 釋 宗演 and Hōjō Tokiyuki [Chikuu] 北条時敬 [竹烏], eds. Tokyo. Block-print edition, 1894.

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