

# The Nembutsu of No-Meaning and The Problem of Genres in The Writings and Statements of Gutoku Shinran

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## Introduction

There are many ways to approach the writings and statements of Shinran. Two of the more common approaches are: 1 to give an overview of Shinran's life and thought by freely drawing on the many works he and his immediate followers left behind, and 2 to give an interpretation or exegesis of a representative work by Shinran such as the *Kyōgyōshinshō* or a work regarded as an accurate record of his statements such as the *Tannishō* taken from a particular genre. In either case, however, there is usually little concern for the fact that Shinran expresses himself through a number of different genres, and this paper represents a preliminary attempt to examine the significance of this fact.

Several different genres can be identified in the more than dozen works attributed to Shinran and his immediate followers.<sup>1</sup> There are philosophically-oriented works such as the *Kyōgyōshinshō* and the *Jōdo monrui jushō* Passages on the Pure Land Way; religious works written more for ordinary followers than for scholar-monks and intellectuals, such as the *Yuishinshō mon i* Notes on Essentials of Faith Alone and the *Ichinen tanen mon i* Notes on Once-calling and Many-calling; songs written in verse form such as the three *wasan*; letters to his followers, as found in the *Mattōshō*; records of his statements, such as the *Tannishō*; and taxonomic summations, as represented by the *Gutokushō*.

There are three questions I would like to explore related to the problem of genres. First is the question of audience. What does a particular genre through which Shinran expresses himself tell us about the intended audience of his statements? Second is the mode of expression. What do the various genres tell us about the mode or manner in which Shinran expresses himself? Third is the relevance of the genre problem for understanding Shinran's life and thought; that is, what kinds of insights can a consideration of genres provide into Shinran and Shin Buddhism as a whole?

Scholarly treatments of Shinran tend to place the *Kyōgyōshinshō* at the top of the interpretive hierarchy and to see his other works under the umbrella of what has come to be regarded as his *magnum opus*. In terms of audience, this gives priority to the scholar-monk or intellectual. With respect to the manner or mode of expression, this places a premium on doctrine and the systematic mastery of difficult concepts. And in terms of overall understanding, this leads to a vision of Shin Buddhism as a highly intellectual religion that requires a sophisticated grasp of doctrinal subtleties.

An examination of genres reveals the possibility of alternative approaches. First, it becomes apparent that the majority of Shinran's statements are directed towards ordinary Pure Land followers who are not intellectuals or highly educated monks. Many of these works suggest that doctrinal mastery is not a precondition for attaining *shinjin*, and that in fact, it is the ordinary person, often illiterate, for whom the Pure Land teachings are best suited. In terms of the mode of expression, Shinran's emphasis in these works is not on doctrinal learning but on awakening to the depth of one's blind passions, including those having to do with scholarly knowledge, and realizing the unobstructed freedom of great compassion. This does not necessarily mean that a work like the *Kyōgyōshinshō* should be regarded as less important. However, it does suggest that the place of this work may at times have been over-emphasized. More importantly, it suggests that the understanding of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* has been overly doctrinal and dogmatic. There is for Shinran a difference between the clever understanding of the sophisticated intellectual, and the deep wisdom of sophisticated self-reflection. Kaneko Daiei makes a similar distinction when he states, "It is not our

task to research the writings of Shinran but to learn from his manner of learning.<sup>2</sup>

## Audience

The *Kyōgyōshinshō*, by far the longest work composed by Shinran, is a complex work containing many difficult concepts, and it is clearly intended to be read by learned scholar-monks and intellectuals. As stated above, the *Kyōgyōshinshō*, also known as the main scripture, *Gohonden*, has come to be regarded as the centerpiece of Shinran's thought, and this has resulted in a view of Shin Buddhism which makes the mastery of doctrine highly important if not essential for the attainment of the religious goal of *shinjin*. This view was institutionalized centuries ago, not only by the fact that the *Kyōgyōshinshō* became the focus of doctrinal exegesis, but also by taking the *Shōshinge* from the *Kyōgyōshinshō* and making it the focus of Shinshū liturgy.

It is questionable, however, whether this view is entirely warranted when the whole range of Shinran's statements is taken into account. There are other works, such as the *Jōdo monrui jushō* and *Jōdo sankyō ōjō monrui*, that appear to fall in the same general genre as the *Kyōgyōshinshō* insofar as they are concerned with the classification of doctrine and the place of Shin Buddhism in the larger framework of Mahayana Buddhism. This, however, does not seem to be the case with most of the other works.

As it is well-known, Shinran wrote the majority of his works between the ages of seventy-four and ninety, after the main portion of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* had been completed and during a time when his awareness and understanding had reached a certain level of maturity and consistency. When these works are carefully examined, it becomes apparent that the majority were written for the ordinary Pure Land follower and not for sophisticated intellectuals or scholar-monks.

There are, for example, two works, the *Yuishinshō mon* and the *Ichinen tanen mon*, which are Shinran's elaborations on Pure Land tracts written by two of his contemporaries, Seikaku Ōnin and Ryūkan Risshi, respectively. Shinran concludes these works with virtually the same words:

That people of the countryside, who do not know the meanings of characters and are painfully and hopelessly ignorant, may easily understand, I have repeatedly written the same things again and again. The educated reader will probably find this writing peculiar and may ridicule it. But paying no heed to such criticism, I write only that foolish people may easily grasp the essential meaning.<sup>3</sup>

As stated in the passage quoted above, Shinran's intent is to provide an accessible rendering of the essence of the nembutsu teaching as set forth by these teachers. At first reading, it may appear as though he is giving an excuse to the more sophisticated and learned reader for giving such a simplistic rendering of the Pure Land teachings. However, one should not overlook the possibility that there is irony at work here and an underlying message: The truth is simple but not necessarily so easy to grasp because we are led astray by our attachment to words and letters.

Such a reading seems to find support in letters written by Shinran, which are also largely directed to ordinary followers. An example of this can be found in a letter addressed to Jōshin-bō:

Simply achieve birth, avoiding all scholarly debate. I recall hearing the late master Hōnen say, "The person of the Jōdo tradition attains birth in the Buddha Land by becoming his foolish self." Moreover, I remember him smile and say, as he watched humble people of no intellectual pretensions coming to visit him, "Without doubt their birth is settled." And I heard him say after a visit by a man brilliant in letters and debating, "I really wonder about his birth." To this day these things come to mind.

The format of the letter is naturally suited to stating the teachings in a manner accessible to the ordinary follower, and Shinran uses it consciously to convey his understanding, encouraging readers to share the contents of letters with others. The letter format allows Shinran to respond succinctly and directly to the doubts and questions of his followers.

The setting aside of scholarly concerns as we find in the passage just cited and the concentration

on the deepening awareness of *shinjin* is not a matter of devaluing the intellect. One might achieve an equally profound understanding by reading the sutras and commentaries as by following the teachings as they are put forth simply in a work like the *Yuishinshō mon* or in the letters. The language of sophisticated intellectual discourse, while integral to the world of the scholar-monk, is not necessary for the ordinary follower to engage in sophisticated self-reflection that opens the way to *shinjin*. This is the spirit in which to understand the statement quoted above, “Simply achieve birth, avoiding all scholarly debate,” a statement that is echoed in the *Tannishō*:

The reason you have come here, crossing over more than ten provinces at the risk of your lives, is solely to ascertain the path that leads to birth in the Pure Land. But if you suspect that I know ways other than the nembutsu to attain birth, or that I am versed in the scriptures connected with it, you are greatly mistaken. If that be the case, there are many eminent scholars in the monasteries of Nara and Mt. Hiei, so you should go see them and ask them in detail about the way to attain birth in the Pure Land.

As for myself, Shinran, I simply receive the words of my dear teacher, Hōnen, “Just say the nembutsu and be saved by Amida, and entrust myself to the Primal Vow.” Besides this, there is nothing else.<sup>5</sup>

From a philological standpoint, the *Tannishō* is not as reliable a source for understanding Shinran’s thought as works that can be directly attributed to him. Yet, in terms of understanding the perspective of the audience, it is even more valuable than works such as the *Yuishinshō mon* or even the letters in conveying the manner in which Shinran’s immediate followers received his teachings, because the *Tannishō* is the record of Shinran’s statements witnessed by his intimate disciple Yuien. And it supports the view that doctrinal learning is unnecessary for attaining the awareness of *shinjin*.

Similarly, the *wasan* are also directed to the ordinary follower, and not the sophisticated intellectual. As James Foard notes, the *wasan* emerged in the early Kamakura Period as a genre of writing that was easy to compose and read.<sup>6</sup> Compared to other forms such as the *kanshi* and *waka* poetry forms and Tendai *shōmyō* chants that were complex and whose composition was regulated by the ruling intellectual elite, the *wasan* are simpler, more in tune with the sensibilities of the ordinary person, and represent a genre that arose within the grass roots movements taking shape beyond the confines of aristocratic culture.

Furthermore, the *wasan* were not merely read, but are songs that eventually became a part of the liturgy of the early Pure Land communities. It was Shinran and Ippen, two Pure Land figures coming out of Hōnen’s lineage and leading their lives outside of the established religious order, who were among the earliest popularizers of this song form that expressed their religious feelings and took hold in the imagination of large numbers of followers.

That the audience of Shinran’s teachings, those to whom he directed the greater part of his efforts and affection, consisted of ordinary people with little or no doctrinal sophistication, is evident in a short verse Shinran appended to the *Shōzōmatsu wasan*:

<i>Yoshi ashi no moji o mo</i>	Those who do not even know
<i>shiranu hito wa mina</i>	the characters for good and bad
<i>Makoto no kokoro narikeru o</i>	All have honest, real hearts.
<i>Zenaku no ji shirigao wa</i>	Those who pretend to know what is good and bad
<i>Osoragoto no katachi nari</i>	Are just putting on a show.
<i>Zehi shirazu jashō mo wakanu</i>	I do not know what is really right or wrong,
<i>Kono mi nari</i>	Orthodox or heterodox.
<i>Shōji shōbi mo nakere domo</i>	Though without the slightest mercy or compassion,

So far we have seen four genres containing Shinran's statements, all of which are intended for the ordinary Pure Land follower: explanations of Pure Land treatises by other teachers, such as the *Yuishinshō mon* and *Ichinen tanen mon*; letters sent by Shinran to his followers; records of his statements as found in the *Tannishō*; and songs expressing both the sense and emotion of Shin Buddhism. There is a fifth genre that is suggested by such works as the *Tannishō* and the foregoing verse from the *Shōzōmatsu wasan*. That is the oral genre of the Dharma talk which seems to have been just as important as any of the others. There are several references in the works cited above to the unlettered and ignorant as the intended audience of Shinran's teachings. There were apparently many followers of Shinran who were not literate and could not read even the simplest writings; among them there were farmers, hunters, iron smiths, and various others who were either too poor to be educated or were excluded as outcasts from participation in the official culture.<sup>8</sup> For them, as well as many others with whom he came into direct contact, it was the oral communication of the teachings which formed the backbone of their understanding.<sup>9</sup>

From the age of twenty-nine when Shinran entered the fold of Hōnen's Pure Land Buddhism until he settled back in Kyoto sometime in his early sixties, Shinran apparently did not do much writing except to work on the *Kyōgyōshinshō*, and his primary mode of communication was oral. Judging by the large number of works they left behind, there were quite a number of Shinran's contemporaries, such as the Kegon master Gyōnen Daitoku and the Hossō monk Gedatsu Jōkei, who gave a great deal of time throughout their careers to composing scholarly treatises. Because Shinran left behind a considerable body of writing, it is easy to overlook the fact that, during his entire career save the final decade or two, he devoted himself primarily to sharing the nembutsu orally, with people from various walks of life, many of whom were illiterate.

All five of the genres examined thus far seem to indicate that the primary audience for Shinran's writings and statements were ordinary Pure Land followers, people from various walks of life that he called friends and fellow practitioners on the Pure Land way, *ondōbō* and *ondōgyō*, and with whom he identified as foolish beings, *bonbu*, the objects of boundless compassion.

### **Mode of expression**

If genres such as simple songs, letters, and direct oral communication are more easily tailored to the specific needs of an audience made up of ordinary people, then these same genre are also more suited to sharing personal experiences and thoughts. The *wasan* are written in a style that resonates with the ethos of the people; the letters respond to the urgent needs and thoughts of distant followers; and there is, of course, no more immediate experience than being in the presence of Shin followers.

Seen in this light, the Pure Land Buddhism of Shinran becomes much less a communication of abstract ideas than the unfolding of personal experiences; while language and ideas play an integral part, there is also much that is exchanged beyond words in what is known as *kannō dōkō*, the subtle interplay of feeling and intuition.

When the focus is shifted to this dimension of personal experience, several things come to attention. One is that a good number of Shinran's statements refer, directly and indirectly, to his own experiences. Although there is not a great deal in the way of biographical and historical information regarding names, dates, and places, there runs through Shinran's writings a vivid sense of the inner life in the context of his relationship to his teacher Hōnen, his followers, his family, and his life lived in the light of the nembutsu.

In this regard, one of the notable characteristics of Shinran's statements is the use of his own name in referring to himself. Although the use of one's own name in referring to one's own

thoughts and actions was not uncommon during his time, Shinran's references stand out in their frequency and importance. As one scholar notes, when Shinran is conveying an experience that resonates at the deepest level or a thought that comes from his innermost being, he often refers to himself using his own name, most commonly Shinran, but also Gutoku Shaku Shinran, and Zenshin.<sup>9</sup>

For example, in a letter to Jōshin he states, "As for myself, Zenshin, I do not attach any significance to the condition, good or bad, of a person on his or her deathbed."<sup>10</sup> There is an important if subtle difference between this and the statement, "There is no significance in the condition, good or bad, of a person on his or her deathbed." Although the two statements can mean the same thing depending on how and in what context they are made, the former emphasizes the fact that Shinran personally and as a teacher would not judge a person any differently due to their condition at death. It is as if the religious power of his character is directly carried into the life of his reader.

Shinran refers to himself in similar fashion in the *Tannishō*, where the greatest number of references can be found in which he uses his own name:

When Shinran said, Zenshin's shinjin and the master's shinjin are one, Seikan, Nembutsu, and others strongly refuted it, saying,

How can you say that our master's shinjin and your shinjin, Zenshin, are the same?

Our master's wisdom and learning are truly profound and to claim that ours are identical is preposterous. But as far as the shinjin which leads to birth is concerned, there is no difference at all.

They are one and the same.<sup>11</sup>

Here again the import of Shinran using his own name is to bring the focus of the discussion onto his lived existence and to take responsibility for the working of shinjin in his own life. Behind this is the whole history of his encounter with his teacher and the life of nembutsu which unfolds thereafter.

There is an even more personal reflection in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*: "How grievous that I, Gutoku Shinran, continue to drown in the ocean of desire and waiver before the mountain of fame, unable to take joy in the fact that I am already included among those destined for birth in the Pure Land."<sup>12</sup> In fact, the *Kyōgyōshinshō* contains numerous statements referring to Shinran's experiences in the inner and outer worlds. These include expressions of deep self-reflection in light of Amida's compassion and wisdom as we find in this passage, as well as references to his dream life, life with Hōnen, and exile to Echigo.<sup>13</sup>

While the *Kyōgyōshinshō* may appear to be a systematic study of doctrine when viewed through the lens of institutional history, its personal and experiential character comes into relief when seen as a chronicle of Shinran's life, especially his inner life.<sup>14</sup>

I have suggested that the *Kyōgyōshinshō* is no more important than Shinran's other works, but it is also not any less important. Scholar-monks are in need of compassion and wisdom as much as ordinary people. What is appropriate for the one is not necessarily well-suited to the other. For those immersed in the discourse of doctrine, it is through weaving doctrine skillfully with inner reflection informed by religious experience that the entanglements of blind passion can most easily be undone.<sup>15</sup> For others a straightforward approach which appeals directly to intuition and feeling is more effective.

### **The natural unfolding of great compassion**

We have seen that Shinran wrote in different genres depending on the audience he was addressing. For the most part, his audience consisted of ordinary Pure Land followers who were often not sophisticated in a scholarly sense. Yet, whether he was addressing the scholar-monk or the illiterate peasant, he brought his whole being into his effort to communicate, drawing on his experiences and inner reflections.

Although it is very well to speak of personal experience, it is not as if there is any intrinsic value in characterizing someone's work in these terms. The importance of doing so is that, for Shinran and Buddhism in general, part of the dilemma of being human lies in the fact that, due to our deep-seated attachments, we do not let ourselves experience life fully and naturally; as a result there is frustration, fear, and a sense of dissatisfaction.

Our usual experience is not true to life but is an experience so-called of our limited idea of life. The experience shared by Shinran with his followers is that of life in all of its fullness -- friendship and travail, life and death, joy and suffering. It is a life of true compassion in the sense that he is fully open to life as it is, in its suchness; rather than relating to people and things merely in terms of what he thinks they are or should be, he embraces them for what they are without questioning their qualifications.

This ability to identify with everyone and everything comes through the awareness of his own limitations and the wisdom of knowing that all beings are hindered by blind passion. Living in this world but not of it, he moves beyond the conventional confines of family, society, and human existence to enjoy the unlimited freedom of formless compassion.

The conventional ideal of family life is one in which each cares for the others above all else; yet, the reality of family life is a relative one. Caring for some means neglecting others, and strife is inseparable from love. It is only in that realm free of relative distinctions that the true life of mutual recognition, a mature life lived in an awareness of interdependence, can unfold. This kind of awareness is expressed by Shinran when he states,

I, Shinran, have never even once uttered the nembutsu for the sake of my father and mother. The reason is that all beings have been fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, in the timeless process of birth-and-death. When I attain Buddhahood in the next birth, each and everyone will be saved.

If it were a good accomplished by my own limited powers, then I could transfer the accumulated merits of nembutsu to save my father and mother. But since this is not the case, when we become free from self-power and quickly attain the enlightenment of the Pure Land, we will save those bound closest to us.<sup>16</sup>

In relation to society, Shinran's freedom from convention is expressed in the *Kyōgyōshinsbō* when he states, "I am neither monk nor layman; for this reason I take the name, bald-headed fool." This statement, addressed to the scholar-monks of his day, is at one level merely descriptive, insofar as it refers to his status as an outlaw priest. At another level, however, it is his declaration of independence from the strictures of convention. At the deepest level, it is an expression of his awareness of living in the embrace of great compassion just as he is, a foolish being with blind passion, a bald-headed fool.

Ultimately, all distinctions are simultaneously affirmed and dissolved in Amida's compassion -- young and old, good and evil, life and death; that is to say, they are all embraced. This is a standpoint that pervades all genres, and is often expressed by Shinran as the meaning of no-meaning. The following subtle variations are taken from representative works of four genres:<sup>18</sup>

*Tariki fushigi ni irinureba, gi naki o gi to su to shinchi seri.*

Upon entering the inconceivable reality of other-power,

One comes to entrust and know that no-meaning is the meaning.<sup>19</sup>

— *Shōzōmatsu wasan*

One ought to know, in other-power, no-meaning is the meaning.<sup>20</sup>

— *Jōdo sangyōōjō monrui*

The great teacher Hōnen said, "No-meaning is the meaning. My understanding is that nothing apart from this realization is necessary for the attainment of birth into the Buddha

Land.<sup>21</sup>

-- *Mattōsbō*

The master Shinran said, in the nembutsu no-meaning is the meaning; it is indescribable, unexplainable, inconceivable.<sup>22</sup>

-- *Tannishō*

For Shinran there is no greater gift than to awaken to the depth of one's blind passion, to realize the unfolding of great compassion, and to share this path out of samsara with others, this simple yet inexhaustible meaning of no-meaning. Thus, in a genre of no-genre, as it were, The master Shinran would always say, When I ponder the compassionate vow of Amida, established through five kalpas of profound thought, it was for myself, Shinran, alone.<sup>23</sup>

## Appendix

### The Works of Gutoku Shinran

The works listed below are regarded as reliably attributable to Shinran. The two exceptions are the *Eshinni shōsoku* Letters of Eshinni and *Tannishō* by Yuien. They have been included because they contain the report of Shinran's statements and experiences by those who knew him intimately. Texts thought to be at least partially in Shinran's own handwriting are marked with an asterisk. Dates are given for the estimated time of completion along with Shinran's age at the time. The time of composition of all of Shinran's letters are thought to fall within the range specified for the *Mattōsbō*.

<i>Kyōgyōshinshō*</i>	1247	75
<i>Jōdo wasan*</i>	1248	76
<i>Kōsō wasan*</i>	1248	76
<i>Yuishinshō mon i*</i>	1250	78
<i>Jōdo monrui jushō</i>	1252	80
<i>Gutokushō</i>	1255	83
<i>Nyūshutsu nimonge*</i>	1256	84
<i>Jōgū Taishi onki</i>	1257	85
<i>Saihōshinanshō*</i>	1257	85
<i>Shōzōmatsu wasan*</i>	1257-1260	85-88
<i>Jōdo sangyō ōjō monrui *</i>	1257	85
<i>Ichinen tanen mon i*</i>	1257	85
<i>Nyorai nishu ekōmon</i>	1257	85
<i>Songō shinzō meimon *</i>	1258	86

<i>Mida Nyorai myōgō toku</i>	1260	88
<i>Mattōsbō*</i>	1251-1260	79-88
<i>Shinran Shōnin goshōsokushū</i>		
<i>Shinran Shōnin kechimiyaku monshū</i>		
<i>Goshōsoku shū*</i>		
<i>Eshinni shōsoku</i>	1263-1268	
<i>Tannishō</i>	1289	

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>For a list of works attributed to Shinran and his immediate followers, see the Appendix: The Works of Gutoku Shinran.

<sup>2</sup>Kaneko Daiei, *Shinshugaku josetsu* Kyoto: Bun eido, 1966 .

<sup>3</sup>*Yuishinshō mon i, Ichinen tanen mon i*, *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, ed. Kaneko Daiei Kyoto: Hozokan, 1964 , pp. 532, 569. Translation taken from *Notes on Once-calling and Many-calling: A Translation of Shinran's Ichinen-tanen mon i*, Shin Buddhism Translation Series, General Editor, Yoshifumi Ueda, Head Translator , Dennis Hirota Kyoto: Honganji International Center, 1980 , p. 50.

<sup>4</sup>*Mattoshō*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, pp. 588-589. Translation taken from: *Letters of Shinran: A Translation of Mattōsbō*, Shin Buddhism Translation Series, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup>*Tannishō*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, pp. 674. Translation taken from: *Tannishō: A Shin Buddhist Classic*, trans. by Taitetsu Unno Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center Press, 1984 , p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>James Foard, *Ippen Shōnin* unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation Stanford University, 1977.

<sup>7</sup>*Shozomatsu wasan*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, p. 462.

<sup>8</sup>There are several references to outcasts among Shinran's followers in various works. The following found in the *Yuishinshō mon i* is one of the most well-known:

When foolish beings who are shackled -- the lowly, such as those who are hunters and peddlers -- wholly entrust themselves to the Name embodying great wisdom, the inconceivable Vow of the Buddha of unhindered light, then they attain supreme nirvana just as they are, burdened with blind passion. Shackled describes us, who are bound by all our various blind passion. *Yuishinshō mon i*, pp. 546-547; translation taken from: *Notes on Essentials of Faith Alone*, Shin Buddhism Translation Series, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup>Soga Ryojin, *Hongan ni ikiru* Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 1972 , pp. 225-228.

<sup>10</sup>*Mattoshō*, p. 588. Translation adapted from: *Letters of Shinran*, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup>*Tannishō*, pp. 692-693; Translation adapted from: *Tannishō*, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>*Kyogyoshinshō*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, p. 139.

<sup>13</sup>See in particular, *Kyogyoshinshō*, pp. 339-342.

<sup>14</sup>Seen in this light, what from another perspective appears to be a doctrinal assertion becomes the expression of religious awareness. For example, the idea of the three minds as one mind can be understood, not as a theoretical statement, but as an expression for the awareness of the relationship between the limited human mind which cannot fulfill the three minds necessary for attaining religious awakening on the one hand, and the mind as the manifestation of suchness that both makes it possible to awaken to one's limited nature and leads one to develop the mind of suchness and compassion. This is a matter which will have to await



another occasion for a more detailed examination.

<sup>15</sup> This reminds me of Wittgenstein's statement that philosophy is the disease for which it is itself the cure.

<sup>16</sup> *Tannisho*, pp. 676-677; Translation taken from: *Tannishō*, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> *Kyogyoshinsho*, p. 340.

<sup>18</sup> There are a total of twelve instances of this expression throughout Shinran's works.

<sup>19</sup> *Shozomatsu wasan*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, p. 451.

<sup>20</sup> *Jodo monrui jusho*, in *Shinran chosaku zenshu*, p. 469.

<sup>21</sup> *Mattoshō*, p. 590. Translation taken from: *Letters of Shinran*, p.34.

<sup>22</sup> *Tannisho*, p. 680.

<sup>23</sup> *Tannisho*, p. 694; Translation taken from: *Tannishō*, p. 35.