

THE BUDDHA WRITINGS OF NICHIREN DAISHÔNIN

– AN INTRODUCTION –

by Martin Bradley

It seems that every time we come to die, we are at some time or another confronted with the clear light of the dharma. It is the clear light of the original state which is, as the *Collation of the Layers of the Various Teachings of All the Buddhas* states, ‘mind just as it is, is light’, our fundamental condition, the simultaneity of all time past, present and future as well as every imaginable space. But every time we die there is always something inherent in us that makes us turn away from this fact, so that we find ourselves again in the entanglement of thoughts which bring back old attachments that haul us all the way back to the cycle of living and dying like roach and dace on the hook of a fishing line. However hallucinating and disorientating our experiences in the intermediate state between dying and being reborn made us feel, we come back into the world of humankind all fresh, innocent and clean as though we had come out of a good bath. We are hardly aware that deep down in our psyches lurk many of the older reactions to the pitfalls of life that make us unhappy. As we grow up we usually become less carefree and progressively burdened by

our respective karma. We look in all directions for paradisiacal relief either in the flesh or in the mind. There are all manners of heavens, all sorts of hells and all kinds of spaces in between. Nichiren Daishônin's aim was to make us understand that the clear light of the dharma realm is in no way apart from whatever situation we are living at this very moment. This essay and these translations are about the quest for an inner realization and becoming an undivided self.

It is in this spirit of bearing the intention of the Daishônin in mind, which was to make all people aware of the fact that our real identity is life itself and at the same time we can get on with being the persons we think we are in the business of living out our lives.

Probably the best way to introduce a collection of translations of the writings of Nichiren Daishônin would be first to give the reader a résumé of the main events in his life. However before I go a step further I would like to explain the title Daishônin. In most Chinese and Japanese dictionaries the ideogram *shô* is defined as a sage, wise and good, upright and correct in all his character. In Harajima's *Nichiren Daishônin Goshô Jiten*, the standard dictionary of Nichiren Shôshû terminology, it says, 'A person whose knowledge and insight is decidedly superior and thoroughly versed in all principles, therefore such a person is able to discern the correct view of the Buddha wisdom.' This word or ideogram could be translated as 'holy', if we were to think of this word in its philological context as having an underlying meaning of 'whole', 'healthy' or 'hail' or in latin languages '*saint*', '*sain*' etc. Placed in front of this word *shô* we have the ideogram *dai*, a pictogram of a man with his arms and legs stretched out. This ideogram is defined in what might be the most ancient of dictionaries, the *Shuowen jiezi* as, 'enormous as the sky, as huge as the earth and also as vast as humankind, therefore this ideogram is in the shape of a human being, that is why it means universal or great.' So here in contrast to the Buddha whose title might be translated as 'the enlightener' we have the Daishônin who is the person who is universally holy.

It is in this light I have translated a few of his writings in order to break out of the sectarian limitations of the various schools that propagate something of his teachings. The aim of this book is to make the all pervading enlightened wisdom of Nichiren Daishônin available to a wider reading public.

Nichiren Daishônin was born on the 16th of the second month of the first year of Jô.ô (1222 CE) and died on the 13th of the tenth month in the fifth year of Kô.an (1282 CE). He is the founder of the Nichiren Shôshû School and is understood by Nichiren Shôshû believers to be the original Buddha of the final phase of the dharma of Shakyamuni.

He was born in the fishing village of Kominato in the Tôjô district of the Awa province – the present day village of Kominato in the Chiba Prefecture. His father was Mikuni no Taifu; his mother was called Umegikunyo and they were said to have led a humble existence along the seashore. As a child he was called Zennichi Maro. At the age of twelve he entered Seichôji Temple under the instruction of the Venerable Dôzen who gave him the name of Yakuô Maro. About the same time Nichiren made a vow to the Bodhisattva Kokûzô that he would become the wisest man in Japan. He took holy orders when he was sixteen and was renamed Zeshôbô Renchô. He then left for Kamakura for further studies. Three years later he came back to the Seichôji Temple and left again almost immediately for Kyôto in order to study and practise the dharma gateways of the Tendai school on Mount Hiei. More precisely it was at the Onjôji Temple, the Tennôji Temple and on Mount Kôya where he studied the doctrinal significance of each and every school as well as reading through all the sutras and other Buddhist writings.

When he was thirty-one he left Mount Hiei and returned to Seichôji Temple. On the morning of April 28th 1253 in the Hall of Holding to the Buddha (*Jibutsutô*) in the All Buddhas Monastic Residence (*Shobutsubô*) of the Seichôji Temple in front of the whole assembly Nichiren announced his fourfold criteria of, ‘Those who bear in mind the formula of Amida Buddha (*Nembutsu*) bring about the hell of incessant suffe-

ring. The school of watchful attention (*Zen*) is the work of the Great Demon of the Sixth Heaven. The Tantric (*Shingon*) school entails the ruin of the state and the *Ritsu* school are the robbers of the land.' He also announced that all sentient beings could be saved by the recitation of *Nam myôhō renge kyô*. When Tôjô Kagenobu the local ruler, who was a follower of Nembutsu, the people who bear in mind the formula of Amida Buddha, heard this he flew into a rage and tried to have Nichiren arrested. However the Venerables Jôken and Gijô, acting as guides, were able to organise his escape and he made his way back to Kominato.

After taking leave of his parents he embarked upon his life's destiny of propagating his teaching. He began his mission in Nagoe no Matsubatani outside Kamakura where he had built a hermit's cottage. At that period he converted numerous people who became his disciples and supporters. In the eleventh month of the fifth year of Kenchô (1253) he was visited by a monk from Mount Hiei called Jôben who was later to become Nisshô, one of the six elder monks. In 1258 on a visit to the Iwamoto Jissôji Temple the then thirteen year old Nikkô Shônin became his disciple and was to remain so until he became the second patriarch after the Daishônin's demise in 1282. Among the other disciples there was Toki Jônin who was a samurai attached to the Shogunate as well as other samurai such as Shijô Kingo, Soya Kyôshin, Kudô Yoshitaka and the two Ikegami brothers Munenaka and Munenaga.

On the 16th day of the seventh month of the first year of Bun.ô (1260) the Daishônin, as a result of the good offices of Yadoya Nyûdô, was able to have his well known *Thesis on Securing the Peace of the Realm through the Establishment of the Correct Dharma* handed over to the regent Hôjô Tokiyori. The argument of this thesis is that if the correct Buddha teaching were established instead of the incomplete doctrines of the time, then the whole country would find peace and stability.

That same year on the night of the 27th of the eighth month the followers of Nembutsu and the Shogunate organised an attack on the Daishônin's hermitage at Matsubatani,

fortunately he was able to escape harm and moved to the estate of Toki Jōnin. On the 12th day of the fifth month of the first year of Kōchō (1261), under the orders of the Shogunate, the Daishōnin was exiled to the Izu Peninsula. His disciple Nikkō Shōnin and Funamori Yasaburō and his wife, accompanied him and were constantly in attendance. One year nine months later the Daishōnin was pardoned and returned to Kamakura. In the first year of Bun.ei (1264) the Daishōnin returned to his birthplace in Awa in order to take care of his mother during her illness. At the same time he propagated his teaching throughout the whole of the Awa region. In the same year on the eleventh day of the eleventh month while Kudō Yoshitaka of Amatsu was returning towards his estate his military escort was attacked by Tōjō Kagenobu, the local ruler, in Komatsubara, both Kudō Yoshitaka and the Venerable Kyōnin were killed in the struggle, the Daishōnin was wounded on the forehead.

In 1268 the Mongolian court sent a delegation with a letter from Kublai Khan demanding that the Shogunate become his vassal. This particular incident was evident proof of the prediction in the *Thesis on Securing the Peace of the Realm through the Establishment of the Correct Dharma* which again urged the nation to take refuge in the correct Dharma. At the same time Nichiren called for a public debate with the monks of all the other schools and sent letters to eleven various religious leaders but he received no reply whatsoever. During the eighth year of Bun.ei (1271) there was a terrible drought from one end of the Japanese archipelago to the other, the then renowned monk Ryōkan performed the prayer ritual for rain but was unable to do so whereas Nichiren Daishōnin's success is well established in the annals of Japanese history. The defeated Ryōkan left Kamakura for the north. This became an opportunity for the monks of the other schools to provoke the Shogunate with slanderous reports concerning the Daishōnin.

On the tenth day of the ninth month of that same year the Daishōnin received a summons from Heinosamon no Jō

Yoritsuna to be interrogated by the Court of Enquiry. At the interrogation Nichiren Daishônin severely reprimanded the hypocritical stance of the Shogunate. The outraged Heinosae-mon no Jô immediately had the Daishônin arrested and taken in the middle of the night to Tatsu no Kuchi to face execution, just as the executioner's sword was about to strike an enormous crystalline pure white light surged up and covered half the sky. In panic the officials of the Shogunate and the samurai in attendance ran in all directions and hid. No one dared try to execute the Daishônin. This was the moment when Nichiren Daishônin reveals the original terrain of the self-received reward body that is used by the Tathâgata of the primordial infinity of the original beginning. It is also referred to as 'eradicating the temporary gateway in order to reveal the original'. On the tenth day of the eleventh month he was exiled to the island of Sado. There he began to compose the *Thesis on Clearing the Eyes*, the *Thesis on the Instigator's Fundamental Object of Veneration for Contemplating the Mind* and also completed a number of important theses such as the *Thesis on the Unbroken Transmission of the Single Universal Concern of Life and Death*, the *Thesis on the Significance of the Actual Fundamental Substance*, *An Account of the Buddha's Revelations for the Future* and the *Thesis on Cultivating Oneself in the Practice as it is Expounded*. During the Daishônin's exile several of his admirers such as the Venerable Abutsu and his wife took refuge in his teaching.

At Tsukahara where the Daishônin was forced to spend his exile in the broken down Sanmaidô Temple, the Nembutsu school challenged him to an open debate in which each and every argument was completely refuted. At this point the Venerable Sairen and the Honma family were converted to the Teachings of Nichiren. After two years or so in 1274 on the 27th day of the third month of the eleventh year of Bun.ei, Nichiren was granted pardon and returned to Kamakura, the eighth day of the fourth month of the same year he was summoned a second time by Heinosae-mon no Jô to appear before the Shogunate. This time they calmly admonished the

Daishônin and told him to treat and see the monks from the other schools as equals. Naturally the reply was that if the Correct Dharma was not held to then it could not be possible to assure the security of the land. The outcome of this interview was that the Daishônin, like other wise men of the past in China and Japan, who, when their efforts to save their country went unheeded, retired to the backwoods to a more hermit-like existence.

In this case Nichiren Daishônin retired to the Hagiri district on Mount Minobu in the province of Kai which is the present day Yamanashi prefecture. There he gave lectures on the Dharma Flower Sutra and for the preparation and education of his disciples he went into the subtlest details so that the dharma would be protracted into eternity. During this same period he also wrote the *Thesis on Selecting the Time* and the *Thesis on the Requital of Grace*. The Senior Monk Nikkô promoted propagation in the direction of Mount Fuji; his first major conversion was Nanjô Tokimitsu then the Matsuno and Kawai no Yui families and others from among the monks of Ryûsenji Temple in Atsuhara. Nisshû, Nichiben and Nichizen also took refuge in the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin. During the same period a number of the local peasants and farmers did the same.

On the 21st day of the ninth month of the second year of Kô'an (1279), all the followers of Nichiren, both monks and laymen, were harassed and pestered as a single sect, finally twenty people, beginning with Jinshirô, were arrested. Heinosamon no Jô interrogated the prisoners at his private residence and pressured them to change their religion. With profound faith all of them persisted in reciting the title and theme *Nam myôhô renge kyô*. Jinshirô, Yagorô and Yarokurô were beheaded and the remaining seventeen were banished from Atsuhara. These events are often referred to as the adversity of the dharma at Atsuhara.

Nevertheless it was on account of this particular adversity of the dharma that Nichiren Daishônin felt that the time had come for him to fulfil his real purpose of coming into the

world. On the 12th day of the tenth month of the second year of Kô.an (1279) he inscribed the Fundamental Object of Veneration of the Altar of the Precept of the original gateway. In order to perpetuate his teaching the Daishônin appointed six elder monks to help him in this task but decided to entrust the succession of the patriarchate to Nikkô. In 1282 while undertaking a journey to the hot springs in Hitachi for rest and recuperation he entered peacefully and auspiciously into Nirvana in the mansion of Ikegami Munenaka at the age of 61 years.

Some years ago I wrote in the introduction of one of my catalogues, 'Is it the dream that dreams the dreamer or are we just caught in rather a sticky trap?' The answer, I am afraid to say, is yes we are, but however sticky it is or to what extent we feel free, depends entirely upon our own efforts.

The idea of presenting these translations of the writings of Nichiren Daishônin is to show people a teaching that might open the way to their finding some kind of individuation. By individuation I mean as C. G. Jung does, a personality that is not divided, that can live in his or her own skin and is reasonably happy. The writings of Nichiren Daishônin and the practice that accompanies his teaching could well be for many people a way to clean up and put back into their right place some of the elements that constitute our inherent schizophrenia or unenlightenment. What I am referring to is that unhappy voice inside us that says, 'There is me, the other people, the other things and places that have nothing to do with how rotten and empty I feel.'

This is not some hard and righteous evangelistic doctrine, although some practitioners may try to affirm that it is. All Buddha teachings and practice are based on universal compassion and a profound respect for all existence. Nevertheless a sincere study and practice may help some people rediscover that the moon has a face, to become aware of the children's voices playing at the end of the street or how caterpillars have transformed the nasturtium leaves into organic pieces of lace.

Also there are not a few people who rediscover the entirety of existence in a single grain of sand.

The object of these translations is to help clear the way for that part of our mind that makes us smile when we read a haiku or look at a painting by Miró or Paul Klee. It is also that part of us that makes us struggle for human rights and dignity.

My intention is not to promote any particular one of the thirty-eight or so number of sects that base their doctrines on the teaching of Nichiren Daishônin, but to try to make it known that such a Buddha teaching exists.

In order to have a clear idea of what the Daishônin intended in his writings, it is essential to have a reasonable understanding of the word *myô* which I translate as utterness. Unfortunately until very recently many of the translations of these writings have twisted the meaning originally intended due to a misunderstanding of the significance of this ideogram. However throughout these theses and other writings there are numerous instances in which the Daishônin himself defines the word *myô* which is the essential point on which his doctrine rests. At this juncture I would like to quote two phrases from the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* to use as a corner stone upon which the reader can build a deeper insight into this imponderably profound perception. 'All-inclusiveness is the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential realms. But should we exchange the expressions "the ever present now" (*soku*) and "all-inclusiveness" (*en*), they could be used as replacements for the word "utterness" (*myô*).⁷ *En* means something that is round, circular or encompassing, hence the use of the word 'all-inclusiveness'. *Ichinen sanzen* literally means 'one mind at present – three thousand'. The Chinese ideogram for 'mind at present' (*nen*) is the ideogram for 'now' placed above the ideogram for 'heart'. Not so long ago even in the west people used to talk about the heart as an organ of thought ('my heart's desire', 'my broken heart' or 'completely heartless' etc.). It is only since the nineteenth century that people have really assimilated the notion that we think with our

brains. It might be worth mentioning that one of the Sanskrit equivalents to the Chinese ideogram (*shin*) for mind or heart is *hrdaya* or *hrd* which is obviously the same philological root of 'heart' in English or '*cœur*' in French.

Within the domain of the Buddha teaching the implication of the word is closer to the idea of existence or being rather than anything to do with the simple process of thinking. In the *Thesis on the Whole being contained in the One Instant of Mind*, Nichiren Daishônin endorses a quotation from Myôra-ku by reiterating that the whole (of existence) is contained in the one instant of mind which, in further detail, is divided into materiality and mind. Again in the *Thesis on the Fundamental Object of Veneration for Contemplating the Mind*, the Daishônin writes, 'These three thousand [existential spaces] are contained in a single instant of mind, if there is no mind then that is the end of it.' In other words if there is no mind to perceive its own existence then nothing can exist. In the *Flower Garland Sutra* there are two lines that have the same inference, 'All dharmas are only mind and the three realms, (i) where sentient beings have organs of sense as well as desires, (ii) where there is a physical dimension and (iii) where there is only mental activity, these three realms are merely ways of knowing.' At first glance existence from the Buddhist point of view seems to be subjective. This may be so since the only way we can be aware of the reality of existence is through the means of perception of a mind that has individualised itself. Even so one instant or the ever present now of the individualised mind is its own utterness; which at the same time has been tarnished by our fundamental unenlightenment. This immediately becomes the materiality and mind within the oneness of mind. This fundamental unenlightenment is the karmic cause for both our bodies and their physical surroundings. Hence the quality of how we perceive through our organs of sense and all our mental capabilities and defects have their origin in this extremely archaic karma.

Nevertheless this one flash of mind which is a continuity of flashes that constitute the ever present now makes itself

known to us by what is occupying our immediate consciousness, then behind the here and now we have somewhat closer thoughts that may be even related to what is going on in the present. Further away there are other thoughts, memories, knowledge, stored away experiences with their corresponding traumas and epiphanies, at greater depth there are darker urges and way below our most archaic mental forces we come to that part of us that is the very thing of life which is what really makes us function as sentient beings. This is the glint of gold at the bottom of the abyss that C. G. Jung so often alludes to in his writings. It is this part of us that brings our inherent archetypes to life and is also the dimension within us that occupies all space all time simultaneously and effortlessly. It is the very thing of life itself. In the language of the Buddha teaching it is the citadel of the ninth cognition (*kyûshiki no miyako*). For those people who are in some way familiar with the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin, this is the Fundamental Object of Veneration within us which we project onto the same Object of Veneration that is hanging in the altar (*butsudan*). Every nano-second is the whole of existence even though it may be only from a subjective worm's eye view.

Another way of looking at this one instant of mind containing the whole universe would be to say, I am here in Belgium where I live, which is a part of Europe, on the old continent that is on the planet Earth, which is a part of the solar system which again is a part of the Milky Way and so on and so forth. It can also be said that what is happening now at this very instant cannot be separate from what is going on at this same moment in New Delhi or on the surface of the sun.

Returning to the subject of the Buddhist technical expression 'three thousand existential spaces', even to-day in the Indian countryside there are not a few people who would find counting up to a thousand as an almost impossible undertaking which would make such an amount practically innumerable. To treble such a sum amounts to incalculability. One can easily imagine that three thousand years ago such a numerical concept could easily imply totality. The existential

spaces are just as it says, they are the spaces where existence takes place. The 'all-roundness' which is in the first quotation we are talking about has the implication of the all-inclusiveness of the entirety of sentient existence.

Coming to the second sentence which I quoted a little earlier, 'But should we exchange the expressions "the ever present now" (*soku*) and "all-inclusiveness" (*en*), they could be used as replacements for the word "utterness" (*myô*).'

It is only in the writings of Nichiren Daishônin that I have ever seen the ideogram *soku* used as a noun. In most dictionaries it is translated as : namely, then, forthwith, immediately. Also there are further interpretations which stem from the Tendai school in China such as 'not separate', 'not two' and 'inseparable from'. It is also a particle that has something akin to the idea of implication, A implies B, B is implicit in A, B does not exist without A. In Harajima's *Nichiren Daishônin Goshô Jiten*, we find among various other definitions 'the inseparability of the sequence of time'. Obviously if we try to make a noun out of all these adverbs and conjunctions we get something like 'the simultaneousness of time', 'synchronicity, i.e. all space, all time simultaneously and effortlessly' or the paraphrase 'the ever present now'.

In the second sentence, 'But should we exchange the expressions "the ever present now" for "all-inclusiveness", they would become alternative words for "utterness" (*myô*).'
Now that we have the added ingredient of time it would suggest that the real identity of life is that we live all space all time which includes the past, present and future, simultaneously but always suspended in the ever present now. We will go into the Buddhist concept of the simultaneity of cause and effect farther on in this essay.

Although it may be possible to dig out the secrets of the universe by thought, reason, logic and mathematics, it is also possible to examine what life is, by means of our feelings, sensations or intuition, it also can be a combination of all four.

All the schools that propagate the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin emphasize that the only way to open up our

inherent Buddha nature is to develop a solid faith in the idea that all beings and all things are fully endowed with the essence of enlightenment. Faith is very like our intuition which is a preparation by the mind without reasoning. Faith is also a kind of trust that can lead to understanding, it is also a part of the process of our personal development. Any flat belief in a dogma without enquiry can only lead to mental stagnation and bigotry. With an open mind we can explore a teaching, look into it, think about it and maybe such a teaching could well be able to impart to us profound psychological truths upon which we can build our lives.

None of the Buddha teachings are philosophies simply based on empirical concepts, instead they are a real exploration into ourselves and our environment which can never be separated from what we are. However there is not only one Buddha teaching, also the profundity, the extent as to how much these teachings involve is entirely dependent on what was Shakyamuni's intention at the time when these doctrines were taught.

In order to clarify the rôle of Nichiren Daishônin's Buddha teaching in the evolution of Buddhist doctrine, I will have to first introduce the word dharma and then proceed into an oversimplified summary of how the Buddha teaching evolved.

First we have this word dharma. According to sanskritologists this word means something that maintains its own character which in itself becomes a standard. Essentially the word dharma signifies the whole universe and everything it contains as an object of thought. Since no single item cannot be divorced from the rest of existence. From the stand point of the Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishônin as well as various other schools of Buddhist thought, even the tiniest grains of dust are fully endowed with the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces (see *Thesis on the Real Aspect of All Dharmas*). As far as we are concerned at the moment, the second meaning of the term 'dharma' is the Buddha teaching. It is here that the dharma has various implications which are unequal in their profundity or extent.

During the first forty-eight years of Shakyamuni's preaching with the scope of setting all sentient beings onto the path of enlightenment, he graded his teaching according to the needs and capacities of his hearers.

The first discourse of Shakyamuni was the Flower Garland Sutra (*Kegonkyô*) which is a voluminous text that establishes the practices of a bodhisattva. However this sutra by being the first is a revelation that describes the Buddha's own enlightenment as well as emphasizing that all sentient beings have a Buddha nature. Also this sutra teaches that each and every other phenomenon, noumenon or event as well as each experience although apparently independent, contains all things, experiences and events in an interdependent and mutually complementary relationship. It is recounted that Shakyamuni expounded this sutra to five of his co-practitioners over a period of either three or six days.

Because the content of the Flower Garland Sutra was not readily accessible to people with little or no instruction, Shakyamuni then embarked upon the general teachings of the individual vehicle which was the basic form of the Buddha doctrine based upon the Pâli Canon whose main concern was the individual substantiation of Nirvana in the sense of it being the complete annihilation of any state of existence whatsoever. In the Nichiren schools that use English often this period is called the 'Agon Period' (*Agonji*) which refers to the Âgama sutras, but since I try to avoid too many foreign words in writing English or any other language for that matter, I refer to this period as 'the general teachings of the individual vehicle', an expression which seems to cover this concept satisfactorily. Albeit these doctrines of the individual vehicle were never intended to be ultimate teachings in themselves, even though Shakyamuni may have said so at the time, the real intention of these teachings as an expedient means was to lead people farther into the Buddha dharma so that they could become fully enlightened.

The third of the five doctrinal periods of Shakyamuni is the period of the equally broad (*Hôdô*) teachings. These

teachings are said to have been expounded for the benefit of sentient beings within the psychological and material realms (*sangai*) where (i) sentient beings have organs of sense as well as desires, where (ii) there is a physical dimension and where (iii) there is only mental activity. This period of teachings lasted for sixteen years. Among the important sutras that were expounded were the Sutra on the Golden Illuminating Light which is often mentioned in the *Thesis on Securing the Peace of the Realm* as well as the Sutra on the Layman Yuimakitsu (*Vimalakîrti*) who refuted the teachings of the followers of the individual vehicle by showing that his own existence was based on relativity or the void.

The wisdom (*Hannya*) period is the fourth of these five periods of teachings. Most of the sutras expounded at this time usually have the expression ‘the wisdom that ferries sentient beings over the sea of living and dying to the shores of Nirvana’ as a part of their titles. In these teachings this particular wisdom is described as being the supreme, highest or paramount on account of its enlightenment and also due to its thorough understanding of the illusion of all existence. This doctrine was expounded as the principal means of attaining Nirvana.

The final and fifth doctrinal period of Shakyamuni is called the Dharma Flower and Nirvana period (*Hokke Nehanji*) which lasted eight years in which most of the time was taken up with expounding the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. This sutra comprises twenty-eight chapters and the version that was translated by Kumârajîva (344-409 CE) is the basic teaching of all the schools of Tendai and Nichiren. The first fourteen chapters deal with events that occur in time and place which are called the ‘temporary gateway’ (*shakumon*) to the dharma and the following chapters refer to the timeless and fundamentally archetypal aspect of existence that is referred to as the ‘original gateway’ (*honmon*) to the dharma. This original gateway is the real revelation of the enlightenment of all the Buddhas of the past, present and future. The whole content of this sutra with all its

adjoining implications was written out in the form of a mandala by Nichiren Daishônin himself as the Fundamental Object of Veneration. The Nirvana Sutra was preached by Shakyamuni just before his death. Nirvana is understood as the cessation of all desires, delusions, mortality and of all activity, thus passing over to a state of non being that is beyond all concept.

Each one of these five periods is its own dharma, each dharma has its own 'extent of the reaches of the mind of the Tathâgata'. Incidentally Tathâgata is a title that means 'arrived at suchness' which obviously has extremely profound implications but since it is a title I leave it untranslated. However out of all the different dharmas there is only one Utterness of the Dharma which we will make an effort to explore in greater depth as we proceed.

In thirteenth century Japan during the Daishônin's lifetime, there was no empirical science nor any scientific progress. There was an arithmetic mainly based on the abacus, physics existed in relation to practical needs. A kind of chemistry did exist especially in relation to metallurgy, paint making and materials for dyeing, it was a chemistry that was beginning to crawl out of its alchemical phase as in China. On the whole most of Japanese learning at that time came from China. Nearly all learning was Chinese except for some poetry and traditional sagas (*monogatari*). Outside of Buddhist doctrinal debate which was always based on the fact that the Buddha always spoke the truth, there was no other discipline that really asked the whys and wherefores of existence. The Japan of Nichiren Daishônin was an age of deep research into and a faithful reliance on the Buddha teachings combined with an unshakable adherence to the mythology, folklore and traditional values of the time.

We must not forget that the Daishônin transmitted many of his teachings in writing to many of his followers. With this I would like to point out that all we know about the doctrines of the Buddha Shakyamuni, Jesus Christ and maybe many other religious founders, is what has been noted down by their

followers. In the case of the Daishōnin, there still remain here and there throughout Japan many of his original writings, let alone copies of these texts made by his closer disciples of the same period.

Coming back to our central discourse which is *myō* and *Myōhō renga kyō*, I would like to give some other definitions of this pivotal word before we explore the ‘theme and title’ (*daimoku*) that is recited by all schools that claim to be a following of Nichiren Daishōnin:

– *Kai*, which means to open up, clear away or make accessible. In this sense those who do not do any of the practices of any of the schools of Nichiren are usually totally unaware that at the bottom of their psyches there is a force that is totally unsullied by any deed or action yet at the same time it permeates the whole of existence and yet it remains itself. In the technical language of the teaching of the Daishōnin this is referred to as the triple body independent of all karma (*musa sanjin*). People who follow other faiths may have deep intuitions about its existence or even visions of it, such as in near death states or trances. What is more important is to know what this archetype consists of and to know that its contents are what makes us what we are. The whole of the constituents of what makes up the forces of life were written out by the Daishōnin who was completely enlightened to them, on the Fundamental Object of Veneration. In order to have a real access to this Object of Veneration, the followers of the various Nichiren schools recite the theme and title. It is also possible to enrich our understanding of life through reading the Daishōnin’s writings and for those people who can read the Chinese ideograms, they can study and ponder over these archetypal forces written out on the Object of Veneration. This again is a subject that will be studied in further depth as we go forward.

– *Gusoku* means completely fulfilled. This expression is found here and there throughout the Dharma Flower Sutra and the writings of Nichiren Daishōnin. The implication of this term is ‘there is nothing lacking’. This concept of comple-

teness stands in contrast to other mandalas that usually have some defect or other, usually because they do not include our less noble urges or our darkest hellish thoughts. If they do then they are only conventionalized painted shapes. From the Buddhist point of view these artisanally painted images only correspond to the axiom of phenomenon (*ke*) which is simply the outward form. Whereas written ideograms seen through the vision of the Daishônin in his *Writing on Questions and Answers with regard to All the Schools*, states that, 'Because written ideograms reveal the conditions of all the sentient beings who write them. People's handwriting lets us know what their mental capacities are. In the light of the equation: mind and materiality not being two separate dharmas, then what people write is a manifestation of those persons' poor-ness or fulfillment. It is only natural that written ideograms are the expression of the non duality of materiality and mind of all sentient beings'. This statement tallies completely with the philosophy of the painters of the post informal school in the 1950s, as well as the opinion of many graphologists. What we write or what we paint or even whatever we sing or say at any given moment is what we really are along with the whole of existence. The non duality of mind materiality, colour or form, sound or odour by being the 'middle way of reality' (*chûdô jissô*) opens up the speculative thought that what artists, musicians, composers, poets and calligraphers have given to humankind are perceptions that give us a greater understanding as to what life is all about. In order that humankind could open up and substantiate the wisdom of the Buddha in each one of us, the Daishônin inscribed the Fundamental Object of Veneration which contains the ultimate equation of what constitutes life and inanimate existence which he expresses in what might seem an over sensitive and yet frighteningly dynamic calligraphy. Since the dharma of Nichiren Daishônin is inseparable from the word 'utterness' (*myô*) it can only have the implication 'being completely fulfilled'.

– The next definition of utterness is *enman*, which is the all-inclusive replenished whole of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces. This replenishment refers to our living all space all time and without effort. In the *Thesis on the Real Aspect of All Dharmas* the Daishōnin makes the following remark, ‘The subjectivity and its dependent environment of the “hell of incessant suffering” (*mukan jigoku*) are completely present in the minds of the supremely holy, so that the person and the environmental terrain of persons such as the guardian Deva King of the North Bishamon (Vaishramana) does not go beyond the bounds of the universe contained in the instant of mind of ordinary people.’

– Another important definition of utterness is *sosei*, renewal, renovation or rebirth. Since each one of us are all living in our own respective ever volatilizing corridor of events which at one end consists of the receding memories of a past which will eventually become the vagaries of history or personal myth. At the other end of this rapidly evaporating corridor which is in fact the ever present now, we also have the wildest dreams of a future that does not yet exist. In this sense Utterness is continually renewing itself and changing. I cannot give a reason why, but it seems that life really started on earth when monocellular organisms found a way of dying instead of multiplying and clustering together with each other ad infinitum. When we die we enter the dimension that is called the ‘antarābhava’ (*chūyū*) which is the intermediate state between dying and rebirth. Those people who are familiar with the text that is popularly known as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* will recognise this period as the *bardo*. Incidentally, we must not forget that the Daishōnin was most certainly familiar with the esoteric doctrines of the Shingon school and that the Fundamental Object of Veneration itself contains tantric elements. However according to many other yogic and tantric writings people who are unused to mind revealing experiences or unschooled in esoteric teachings and who are also so attached to themselves that their only thought is ‘what is going to happen to me?’ very often have very traumatic

experiences in this intermediate state before being reborn again. It is my personal opinion that whatever happens to us during this state highly influences and moulds the archetypes of our minds which in turn have a lot to do with our future bodies and their surroundings since through such experiences, our fears, longings, tendencies to love or to hate etc., are already firmly planted. According to these tantric texts all our positive and negative reactions to the visions in the intermediate state before rebirth are our own choices and our reaction to them stem from previous existences. Since we can never be separated from Utterness itself then this idea might lead to a vague idea as to how karma works. This idea is fully implied in the following concept of the Daishônin in his *Collation of the Layers of the Various Teachings of All the Buddhas of the Past, Present and Future as to which Specific Doctrines are to be Discarded or Established* where he states, 'In as much as the mind and the dharma of the Buddha is Utterness as well as the mind and dharmas of sentient beings are also utterness and that both these two utternesses are what make our minds work, so that outside of mind dharmas do not exist at all.' Albeit the possibility of being reborn again opens up opportunities to seek an inner understanding of what our identity really is and all that it signifies. This also applies to our every day reality since all of us want to be happy. This realisation of happiness then comes about through a search for the right teaching and a sincere desire to understand what our lives are about. Because life is in no way separate from Utterness since this is what sets everything in motion, then it is in this sense that this word means renewal.

– Utterness also has the meaning of the dharma nature. This particular nuance is probably the hardest to explain since it is beyond the bounds of ordinary experience. The dharma nature is the 'real suchness' (*shinnyô*) that underlies all existence, it is also understood as being indescribable and sometimes it is referred to as the 'Buddha nature' (*busshô*). Within the limits of human experience and from reading tantric texts, the dharma nature might be described as the clear light that is

often seen in near death experiences or in hallucinogenic and other visionary states. Some people who have had this kind of experience say that they become the clear light and that by becoming so they are completely free from any subjectivity or objectivity. Nevertheless, this dharma nature or Buddha nature not only exists for humankind, one might suppose that it exists also for other living creatures, and also the insentient and the inanimate have a dharma nature as well. This point is clearly revealed in the *Esoteric Oral Transmission concerning Plants, Trees and the Environment having their Inherent Buddha Nature made Manifest*, 'The question is asked: in the Dharma Flower Sutra are both sentient beings and that which is insentient capable of revealing their inherent Buddha nature? The answer is given: the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma [the sutra which is made up of vertical threads that constitute the realms where existence takes place into which is woven the filament of the simultaneousness of cause and effect that is symbolised by the lotus flower], is in itself the entirety or utterness (*myô*) of existence which is also the dharma (*hō*).'

This overwhelming title of this particular sutra would suggest that the absolute essence of reality and its substantiation entails the concurrence of all space and all the tenses of past, present or future, suspended in an ever immediate present. Albeit most of us are still stuck in the sticky trap with its karmically delineated boundaries. What these boundaries really consist of are the five aggregates (*go.on*) that darken the awareness of our original enlightenment, (i) a material form with its equally physical environment, (ii) reception, sensation, feeling and the functioning of the mind in connection with affairs and things, (iii) conception, thought, discerning and the functioning of the mind in distinguishing what is going on in both its psychological and material surroundings, (iv) the functioning of the mind in its processes with regards to likes, dislikes, good and evil, etc., (v) the mental faculty that makes us think we are who we are on account of what we know. Hence due to such impediments we are unable to see

readily into the future or further back into the past beyond our own lived experiences but we can have intuition and knowledge. In this light, C. G. Jung suggests that paranormal gifts and psychic phenomenon are something to do with a kind of 'short circuit' between the realms of dharmas which are really various states of consciousness or even the whole.

It is here that I would like to make another digression. The Daishônin, for the various reasons that are only sketchily described in the abbreviated biography at the beginning of this essay, received a summons to be interrogated by the Court of Enquiry. At this interrogation Nichiren Daishônin reprimanded the hypocritical attitude of the Shogunate. The outraged Minister Heinosaemon no Jô immediately had the Daishônin arrested. In the middle of the night he was taken to Tatsu no Kuchi to face being put to death by beheading. Just as the executioner's blade was about to swish down onto the Daishônin's neck, a brilliant orb brighter than the full moon shot across the sky from the southeast to northwest. It was shortly before dawn yet still too dark to see anyone's face but the radiant object lit up the whole surroundings like a powerful magnesium flare. The executioner fell on his face with his eyes so dazzled that he could not see. The soldiers were terrified and panic stricken... In spite of various astronomical explanations for this event, has anybody thought that this orb of clear diamond light that could illuminate all its surroundings was anything other than a projection or some kind of spilling over of the utterly enlightened mind of the Daishônin himself as he was about to be decapitated? It would be difficult to imagine a person who had a handwriting with such wise hypersensitivity and strength not being associated with some kind of paranormal event or other. The tears that the Daishônin mentions in his *Thesis on the Real Aspect of All Dharmas* almost allude to the tears that were not uncommonly shed during the mind revealing experiences of many people during the latter half of the twentieth century. However such events that occurred at Tatsu no Kuchi where the Daishônin was nearly executed remain imponderably inexplicable. This last

term ‘imponderably inexplicable’ is also one of the many definitions of Utterness. Then there is the concept of ‘Utterness in comparison with other teachings’ (*sôtaimyô*). Essentially this particular view means that when the Dharma Flower Sutra is compared with all the other sutras, it is only this sutra that entails the synchronicity of all space and all time etc. Whereas existence in all the other Buddha teachings see time as a long piece of string which is really only a figment of our individual minds. Hence all other sutras cannot measure up to the profundity of the Dharma Flower. This opens up the way for the idea of ‘Utterness as an absolute quality separate from all else’ (*zettaiimyô*). At all events Utterness cannot exist without the comparability of the dharma or dharmas. Before leaving these definitions of Utterness and moving on to the word dharma, I would first like to explain that in terms of the Buddha teaching the ten realms of dharmas, in every day language, correspond to ten different states of mind. To give an example, when we are angry or rapturously in love, these particular states may be the dominant mood when they are happening, but at the same time even though we may be in the blindest of rages or at the height of orgasmic ecstasy something of the rest of our lives remains somewhere in our heads. What I am trying to say is that each one of the ten dharma realms is mutually endowed with the same ten realms, or as some schools put it, the mutual possession of the ten realms of dharmas. However in order to understand this as a living experience, our heads know no simple joy nor a sheet of pain that is not psychologically tinged by everything that happened prior to or after what is happening at any given moment, our minds are as vast as the whole of existence.

Since Utterness sublimely includes everything that was, everything that is, and everything that will happen as well as every imaginable space, we are confronted with the question about free will. Apart from the dharma realm of the Buddha the other nine realms of dharmas are seen as a network of interacting volatile corridors of dream time and dream space wherein people are only fully conscious of the actual instant

they are living, so that they react according to their karmically construed personalities to situations that are also illusory as the rest of their unenlightenment.

In the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra*, the Daishônin states that 'Utterness is the dharma nature and dharmas are its unenlightenment. The single entity of unenlightenment and the dharma nature is called the Utterness of the Dharma.' I have no doubt that the reader is fully aware that the word dharma is a semantic minefield. However, whatever other meanings, nuances and implications that can be given to this word, within the boundaries of the Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishônin, dharmas are everything that we think, see, hear, smell, taste, touch or no matter what comes onto the horizons of our consciousness as well as all that lies submerged below any level of awareness. Whatever it is, it is existence and therefore a dharma. In a more verbose way we could define dharma as the momentary configuration of events. There can be no dharma that stands alone. As I have said earlier on, both the Buddha teachings of Shakyamuni and the Daishônin tend to be expounded from a subjective angle. Hence we have the dharma that is the teaching of the enlightened who perceive their existence in terms of the wholeness of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces. Dharmas are not separate from Utterness. But it is through studying the writings of the Daishônin that one can have an idea of what is the real implication of becoming aware of our inherent Buddha nature not being separate from our respective personalities. To really substantiate this notion then it becomes a question of doing the whole practice. At this point it might be worth mentioning that there is no Buddha teaching without a practice that corresponds to it.

Even though the concept of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces is included in the glossary at the end of this book, I am going to explain it so that the reader can grasp this concept in further detail. For the sake of putting our various mental states and moods that are often indefinable at the edges such as our complexes, joys,

angers and sufferings into a schema where they can be grasped more clearly, the Buddha teaching evolved the doctrine of the ten realms of dharmas.

The unhappiest realm of dharmas is hell (*jigokukai*) and the suffering of its denizens. This would include all suffering either physical or mental. Suffering begins at the stage of a thorn in your little finger, feeling the lash of pain caused by words that hurt, humiliations, the pain of broken relationships, illnesses and injuries, this also must include the horrors of war and the almost unimaginable mental dimension of the perpetrators and the victims of things that happened in the Second World War as well as what has been going on in the Middle East, Africa and other places in recent years. Hell is also hate. Each and everyone of us has suffered in some way or another. From a more conventional and stereotyped Buddhist point of view, there are, according to various teachings of the individual vehicle, eight hot hells, eight cold hells which are situated under the world of humankind. Usually the descriptions of these hells are mediaeval and sadistic and, in their iconographic way, far removed from the real pain, suffering and mental anguish that many people experience. The object of the teaching of Nichiren Daishōnin is to lead people away from such torments.

Hungry demons (*gaki*), in the Buddhist teaching of Shakyamuni, are seen as ghosts who live in a purgatorial state, some say under the ground. It is their sad destination that they are condemned to continually hanker after food, sex, drink, and other such things that they covet. It is reported that there are 39 classes of these unfortunate creatures. This is the second of the three lower karmic destinations. In traditional Buddhist iconography these beings are depicted as having long thin necks with swollen bellies that force them to crawl on the ground. There are also a number of Japanese paintings of the Edo period depicting hungry ghosts hanging around the more sordid and seedy establishments of the red light districts. The present day visualisation would be closer to heroin addicts in need of a fix or alcoholic derelicts haunted by their thirst, or

the need for a cigarette. This is the part of us that craves, wants and must have in order to continue. From a positive angle, the perpetual desire for food, nourishment, money etc., is the mechanism to defend the life within us in order to do the things that make life positive. Again like all the other realms of dharmas, the mental state of the hungry demon is also endowed with all the other ten.

In the teachings prior to those of Nichiren Daishônin, the realms of dharmas of animality (*chikushôkai*) meant to be born as an animal, even though there must be psychic entities that can only be incarnated in the animal world. One of the definitions of animality is a sentient being who is essentially motivated by animal instincts and territorialities. Since we also have been described as hairless apes, then maybe we can recognize that our animal qualities are not only limited to eating, defecation and sex but are also partly responsible for our class systems, hierarchies and feudalism in the office or in the work place. However to be born with a human body also gives us the opportunity to open up our minds to comprehend what life is all about.

The ashuras (*shurakai*), originally in the brahmanic and vedic mythology were titanesque beings who were always vying with the devas for superiority. Traditionally they are defined as being 'ugly', 'not devas' and 'without wings'. There are four categories of these beings that depends on the manner of their birth, which means they are born from eggs or from a womb or born by transformation or as spawn in the water. Their habitat is the ocean which only comes up to their knees but other less powerful ashuras live in mountain caves in the west. In popular iconography the kings of the ashuras are represented with three faces and they have either four or six arms, they also have realms and palaces like the devas. In the teaching of Nichiren Daishônin this realm of dharmas corresponds to the psychological mechanism of wanting to be centre of attention, to be noticed by others and the desire to control. Often when these tendencies are frustrated they then turn into anger, rage and jealousy. In simpler terms it has a lot to do

with the show off within us. In the *Thesis on the Fundamental Object for Contemplating the Mind*, the Daishōnin refers to cajolery, wheedling and 'buttering up' as a part of this dimension. In a more positive sense this is the part of us that says we need our own space which enables us to mentally and physically carry on living. In other words all that our egos need.

The realm of dharmas of humanity (*jinkai*) is the sense of equanimity and rationality. In spite of all our troublesome worries, there is a part of us that reassures us that things are not as bad as they appear and that everything is all right. It is the part of us that gets on with our daily living without too many upsets. In other words a satisfactory life. In the Buddha teaching of Shakyamuni the realm of dharmas of humanity meant being born as a human being.

As far as the teaching of Shakyamuni is concerned, the realms of dharmas of the devas (*tenkai*) refer mainly to the merits of the divinities of Brahmanism and other Vedic teachings. The devas are said to have golden bodies, superhuman powers and to have extremely long lives filled with joy and ecstasy but, like all other life spans at some time or other, they have to come to an end. Many devas are protectors of the Buddha teaching. According to the Daishōnin's writing on *Securing the Peace of the Realm through the Establishment of the Correct Dharma*, one gets the impression that the devas protect human interests and that they are also nourished by religious rites and especially by the recitation of the title and theme *Nam myōhō renge kyō*. This is something we will explore further as this essay proceeds. There are many cultures that have legends and mythologies concerning sentient beings who would come into the category of devas such as the elves, guardian spirits, local gods, saints, angels and ancestral divinities. Since there are a number of names of devas who are important to the Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishōnin inscribed on the Fundamental Object of Veneration, would not these tutelary essences be archaic archetypal elements in the depth of our psyches who have some influence over our lives in one way or another? Or when we create so much bad

karma by doing things that are unwholesome, these archetypes can no longer take part in what we do, then these devas or whatever they may be no longer make their presences felt which allows more destructive energies take their place. For anyone who has practised the teachings of the Daishônin cannot not be aware of forces that in some way guide our lives, often in the most unexpected way. What I have just said about the devas is obviously a personal intuition. However, since somebody is likely to ask the question, 'What are the devas?' I thought an allusion to their existence might be food for speculation. Because the devas have extremely happy and ecstatic long lives that unavoidably must come to an end in a protractedly distant future, the concept of the realms of dharmas of the devas in the teaching of Nichiren Daishônin refers to our joys and epiphanies. Whatever our raptures and delights may be, like falling in love, getting the right job, a great night out or the enjoyment of doing something useful or creative, however exhilarating or joyful our experiences may be, we are always sooner or later compelled to return to the more severe dimension of our normal realities of living. The realms of dharmas of the devas refer to the impermanence of all our joys, raptures and delights.

The realm of dharmas of the hearers of the voice (*shômon-kai*) is a literal translation of the Sino-Japanese Buddhist term which means 'those who listen to or have heard the Buddha's voice'. In the teaching of Nichiren Daishônin this term has the undertone of those who seek a meaning in their lives. Seen as a state of mind it is the dimension of learning and wanting to find out. This process starts in our early childhood with continual questions in the form of 'What is...?' and 'Why?' This is the part of us that is the researcher and inquirer and the part of us where learning is still going on.

The realm of dharmas of the partially enlightened due to karmic circumstances (*engakukai*) is different from the search for understanding and wanting to know why. This psychological dimension is based on something comparable to the sensitivity of the mature painter or sculptor who perceive the

phenomenal world around and within them as an aesthetic oneness, even though artists may pick and choose varying and contrasting colours and shapes in order to communicate their respective pictorial or sculptural messages. This is also true for composers who understand sound as a oneness that can be broken up, discriminated and made use of. Again it is the same with people who work with words and no doubt there must be equivalents in the worlds of mathematics, science, and biology etc. etc. This realm of dharmas involves those people who have a deep understanding about what life itself entails but not all its secrets. In the teachings that the Buddha Shakyamuni preached before the universal vehicle (*daijô*, *mahâyâna*), people who were partially enlightened due to karmic circumstances tended to be more involved in their own substantiation of Nirvana rather than taking into consideration all the people suffering in the bewilderment of the delusions of life around them. It is this point that evokes the essential difference between the individual vehicle (*shôjô*, *hînayâna*) and the universal vehicle that strives for the Buddha enlightenment of all sentient beings.

The realms of dharmas of the bodhisattvas (*bosatsukai*) in the teachings of Shakyamuni up to the time of the original gateway (*honmon*) of the Dharma Flower Sutra, indicated persons who seek enlightenment not only for themselves but also strive for the Buddha enlightenment of all sentient beings. However the enlightenment of the Buddha teachings prior to the Dharma Flower Sutra are fundamentally flawed with the concept of a Buddhahood in the sense of attaining Nirvana after arduous practices over a period of many kalpas. What this really entails is that after becoming a Buddha with the body of a Buddha such as seen in Buddha images, one would then be extinguished into the void of relativity (*kû*) and no longer exist at all. Apart from such an attainment being hardly feasible, especially the continuous practices spread over many aeons, the possibility of the real happiness and inner realization of the Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishônin whose object is to open up our inherent nature with our persons just

as they are remains within the bounds of possibility. Bodhisattvas especially with the connotation of bodhisattvas who spring from the earth are understood as not only people who practice for themselves but seek to set others onto this particular path which is the practice and doctrine of all the Buddhas of the past, present and future. At another level the bodhisattva realm is that part of us which wants to do something for the benefit of others, essentially it is our altruistic nature.

To be more precise about the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth, I will have to digress from what I was saying about the altruistic qualities of those persons who belong to the dharma realm of the bodhisattvas, in order to deal with one of the most difficult doctrines of the schools of Nichiren.

The bodhisattvas who spring from the earth are first mentioned in The Fifteenth Chapter of the Dharma Flower Sutra on the Bodhisattvas Springing from the Earth which is the chapter that marks the beginning of the teaching of the original gateway. This gateway to the dharma might well be thought of as a psychological description of the archetypal and fundamental state of all sentient existence.

In previous chapters myriads and myriads of bodhisattvas who had come from other realms, asked the Buddha Shakyamuni for permission to propagate the Dharma Flower Sutra among the world of humankind after his demise into Nirvana. Nevertheless the Buddha refused by stating that there were already bodhisattvas capable of carrying out this task. At the beginning of the Fifteenth Chapter the ground shook and an astronomical number of bodhisattvas sprang from the earth, each one accompanied by his own coherent following of devotees. These bodhisattvas were led by four bodhisattvas, Jôgyô, Muhengyô, Jyôgyô and Anryûgyô. Since this gateway to the dharma is so delicate and profound, I would rather quote the Daishônin from his 'Single All Embracing Item on the Bodhisattvas who Spring from the Earth', which is a part of the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* (Goshô Shimpén, p.1764):

‘Number One, Concerning the Teachers who are Leaders of the Chant. The *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* says, “The whole of this particular chapter on Springing from the Earth deals with those bodhisattvas who were converted in the inherent infinity of existence.” The behavioural norm of the bodhisattvas who were converted in the inherent infinity of existence is *Nam myôhō renge kyô*, this means that they recite it. “To lead” means to induce and guide all sentient beings of the world of humankind to the Pure Terrain of Spirit Vulture’s Peak. The leaders and tutors of the final period of the dharma of Shakyamuni who confine themselves to the original doctrine of the conversion within the inherent infinity of existence are referred to as teachers. Now, in order to make it clear what the Four Universal Bodhisattvas imply, it says in the ninth fascicle of the *Supplementary Adjustments and Annotations to Myôra-ku’s Textual Explanation of the Dharma Flower Sutra*, “The four guides and teachers who are in the sutra actually depict four specific virtues, Jôgyô [litt: The Practice that is Supreme] represents I, Nichiren. Muhengyô [litt: Practice without Bounds] stands for timelessness. Jyôgyô [litt: the Practice of Purity] represents purity itself. Anryûgyô which literally means ‘the Practice that Establishes Tranquillity’ portrays happiness. At one moment in time there is one single person who is to be endowed with these four significant qualities.

The practice that dwells on the terrain that is completely free and unrestricted, as well as being exempt from the two kinds of death one of which is the living and dying of ordinary sentient beings, whereas the other is seen by persons that are holy or bodhisattvas as nothing more than a transition. Such an observance is called the Practice that is Supreme (*Jôgyô*). By going beyond the confinement of impermanency this practice is thought of as the Practice without Bounds (*Muhengyô*). On account of the potential of this practice to rid ourselves of the polluting involve-

ments of the five fundamental conditions that bring about troublesome worries in our physical surroundings along with their corresponding needs and desires, as well as the obstacles and attachments that lurk in the domain of our thoughts and ideas, this practice is spoken of as the Practice of Purity (*Jyôgyô*). Because the Bodhi Tree is a sphere of virtues this adherence is said to be the Practice that Establishes Tranquillity (*Anryûgyô*).’

Now all those who follow Nichiren and reverently recite *Nam myôhō renge kyô* follow the same course as the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth. The *Oral Transmission* also states that fire has the function of burning things, water is used for making things clean, wind has the rôle of blowing dust and dirt away and the earth has the purpose of making plants and trees grow. These are the effective benefits of the four bodhisattvas. Even though the function of these four bodhisattvas differ, all of them carry out the practice of the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. The explanation for the reason why these four bodhisattvas inhabit the nether region is said to be ‘that the Buddha nature is a bottomless abyss and the profundity of its essential point is unfathomable’. ‘By being the nether region, it is where they abide. By being the nether region it is where the actual intrinsicity of existence lies.’ In the *Supplementary Adjustments and Annotations* it says, ‘With regard to the nether region, the Chinese monk Jiku Dô Shô (?-434) declared that by living in the nether region the four bodhisattvas themselves are the actual intrinsicity of existence.’ But the actual intrinsicity of existence is said to come out of its abode and make itself apparent. Nevertheless the *Oral Transmission* does not say that the thousands of plants and myriads of trees are not the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth. Therefore the bodhisattvas themselves who spring from the earth are said to be the original terrain which is the inherent infinity of each and every instant. The origin is the effective benefit of a past which would figuratively be described as a time that existed prior to

a period which would amount to all particles of dust that go into the making of five hundred kalpas. This in fact refers to the effective benefit that has neither beginning nor end. The bodhisattvas that spring from the earth are those that hold to the original dharma which is inherently infinite, the dharma which is inherently infinite is *Nam myôhō renge kyô*. Since this title and theme is decidedly what the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth hold to, then it is not in the possession of those bodhisattvas who were converted through the temporary gateway to the dharma which is made up of doctrines suspended in time and space. From the fundamental substance of this inherently infinite dharma emerges its function which expands into the one instant of thought containing three thousand existential spaces. This is made clear in Tendai's *Desistance from Troublesome Worries in order to See Clearly*. At a more general level, the explanations of the Universal Teacher Tendai and the Teacher of Humankind consist of the propagation and the application of the Utterness of the Dharma, 'This inherently infinite original dharma is accepted and held to through the single word faith. The sharp sword that can confront and cure our primordial unenlightenment is the single word faith. You must realize that faith is defined as being free of doubt.'

To finish this digression which nevertheless is very important for the understanding of the concept of a bodhisattva from the standpoint of the Nichiren schools, I would like to add that the Daishônin in his *Thesis on the Fundamental Object of Veneration for Contemplating the Mind*, refers to a phrase in the Sutra on the Buddha's Passing over to Nirvana, where it says that 'Even an unrepenting wicked man can still have love and affection for his wife and children, this is the part of us that is the bodhisattva'.

With regard to the dharma realm of the Buddha (*bukkai*), here the word dharma is in the singular because the Buddhas see the whole of existence as a oneness that is not separate from its synchronistic dynamo, Utterness. Since this is beyond the experience of anyone I know of, I shall simply quote from

the second part of the *Collation of the Layers of the Various Teachings of All the Buddhas of the Past, Present and Future as to Which Specific Doctrines are to be Discarded or Established*, 'You must make the effort to substantiate the intrinsicity of the esoteric treasure [The Fundamental Object of Veneration] through your practice, since this is what All the Buddhas of the past, present and future originally had in mind. The two holy persons the Bodhisattva Yakuô and the Bodhisattva Yuze along with the two Universal Guardian Deva Kings Jikoku and Bishamon as well as the Rakshashi Kishimojin and her daughters will watch over you and protect you. When you die you will be immediately reborn in the ultimate supreme terrain of silence and illumination. But should you for the shortest while return to the dream of living and dying your person [dharma body] will completely fill all the realms of dharmas of the ten directions and your mind will be in the physical incarnations of all sentient beings. You will urge them on towards enlightenment from within and on the outside you will show these sentient beings which path to take. Since there is a mutual correspondence between what is on the inside and what is on the outside, as well as there being a harmony between causes and karmic circumstances, you will busy yourself with the immense compassion that lies in the fullness of the reaches of your mind that is independently free to effectively benefit all sentient beings simultaneously.' In the light of what I just quoted, I can only suppose that a person who has opened up his inherent Buddha nature with his personality just as it stands, there is somewhere in the depths of that person a consciousness of that person's identity being the Utterness of the Dharma itself as well as the wisdom to discern its subtlest workings.

Here I have to reiterate that each one of these realms of dharmas is furnished with the other ten, not as a sequel, nor in any order, but rather as an amorphous blob of ten potentialities of personality change. As I said a little earlier on, even when I am famished which is a condition that belongs to the realms of dharmas of the hungry demons, the affection I have

for my friends does not diminish (the bodhisattva realm), yet my anger with that nasty civil servant is still lingering (the realm of the ashuras), I am still enjoying the surroundings of my home (the realm of humanity) and my ability to read the Dharma Flower Sutra in the original has not been overshadowed in any way (the realm of the hearers of the Buddha's voice) and now I have made a fart which is something to do with the realm of dharmas of animality and so on and so forth. These ten realms of dharmas that have now become a hundred, because each one of these ten realms of dharmas are mutually endowed with the other ten they become the basic fundamental of understanding this Buddhist view of life. Now we must look into the ten such qualities that define and describe in further clarity how we live out the first hundred psychological impulses.

In the *Thesis on the Whole being Contained in the One Instant of Mind*, the first sentence begins with, 'The whole is contained in the one instant of mind which in further detail, this one instant is divided into a combination of materiality and mind.' The concept and the ideogram for 'materiality' is just a little more complex than what it seems. Perhaps I should start by saying that colour, form, solidity and their attractiveness or ugliness are not separate from each other. Originally the ideogram for materiality was a pictogram of a human face, at first it must have had the intended meaning of how someone appears to the outside world. Later, like all words, the significances and nuances attached to this ideogram multiplied as the centuries went by. Apart from the idea of colour not being separate from its form, in the grey rustic world of ancient China complexions and pinkness became sexual fetishes. We have a famous sentence from the Analects of Confucius that says, 'I have not yet seen anyone loving virtues as much as they like pink faces (i.e. sex).' Albeit, here in my translations materiality implies colour, its form and in this context we should also include density, hence the translation of *shiki* as materiality. The opposite of this concept is mind. The original Chinese ideogram was a simplified picture of a human heart

which as we have said before, was for the ancients the organ with which they thought. In the Buddha teaching we have the equation ‘mind and materiality are not two separate entities’ (*shiki shin funi*). It is virtually impossible to close one’s eyes and not see at least an indigo backcloth on which to project our waking minds, usually the backcloth moves and things like clouds, marshmallows, streaks of light, patterns, changing landscapes, strange architecture and even non-existent toys, faces and strange animals appear in an endless procession as our minds tick over at their own pace. But if we open our eyes and look at the space around us, whether it is outside with trees and houses or what have you, or an interior of a room with its furnishings, none of this could possibly exist if we did not have a mind to perceive them. Although materiality and mind may not be separate from each other, there is a difference between what goes on in our heads and what we see when we open our eyes. In addition to the images that float in our heads there are also more abstract notions such as words, figures and imagined sounds and touch. In the second part of the sentence quoted earlier on, ‘in further detail, this one instant [of mind] is divided into materiality and mind’, most people seem to see their lives in these terms, which lead us to the ten such qualities (*jûnyoze*) which in the Dharma Flower Sutra are ten modalities that are ingrained in every aspect and instant of life. Anything or any moment that we live has a way it looks or an appearance, in terms of the ten such qualities it is defined as ‘such an appearance’ which being just the way things look, is referred to as ‘materiality’. Now there is a red box in front of me and it is (i) such an appearance. In spite of the phenomenal aspect of existence that is continuously changing from second to second, but nevertheless whatever is happening there is also some kind of mental state behind it that may not be apparent on the surface, this is called (ii) such an inner quality or nature. This such quality is seen as mind. This would point to every thing we know about the box, its history, where it comes from, what it is made of as well as all our experiences with boxes and the colour red. Ultimately such thoughts would have to

arrive at the Buddha wisdom of *Nam myôhō renge kyō*. This concept will become clearer on reading the *Esoteric Oral Transmission concerning Plants, Trees and the Environment having their Inherent Buddha Nature made Manifest* and also *Concerning the Ten Such Qualities*. To explain (iii) such a substance, consistency or reality, then when I am confronted with this red box which is merely its appearance, something in my head identifies it and says 'red box'. This immediately becomes the fusion of both materiality and mind making the red box something real or tangible which is 'such a reality, consistency or substance'. These first three qualities are the essential make up of all life. The red box is just as it is phenomena (*ke*), what goes on in my mind when I see it is *kû* which is either relativity or the void. The moment I am fully aware what this red box is, then it becomes the middle way of reality (*chûdô jissô*). Now we can add another such quality, (iv) such a strength, impact or influence, so I can say that this red box is too garish and it hurts my eyes. This such quality is both materiality and mind. (v) Such a function or what is it for? I use this box to keep things in, since this is something practical and also something that I know about, in Buddhist technical language it is referred to as being both materiality and mind. Next we come to (vi) such a cause which at a highly banal level would be a place to keep my things or the need for a box, all causes are hidden away in the void of relativity and the only way we have access to this void of relativity is through our minds. Therefore cause as a such quality is categorized as mind. (vii) Such a karmic circumstance or relationship could be either the paint that makes the box red or the choice to have it this colour. Both these choices are physical and mental concomitancies which are classified as being both materiality and mind. We cannot see (viii) such a fruition since it was my decision to paint it red and therefore it is something that is in my mind. But what we do see is (ix) such a reward or requital which is the redness of the box. The last such quality is (x) such a final superlative that is equally present from the first to the last of the ten such qualities. From the viewpoint of the

Buddha teaching all these ten such qualities are eternally inseparable from every possible living experience. This final superlative is the real aspect of all dharmas.

Before I can go into the deeper implications of the ten such qualities, I would like to emphasize that these ten such qualities are intrinsically ingrained in the hundred realms of dharmas which now become a total of a thousand such qualities. In the *Esoteric Oral Transmission concerning Plants, Trees and the Environment having their Inherent Buddha Nature made Manifest* and also in other writings, these thousand such qualities may include all subjective existence, but such an existence is purely theoretical. Before we can approach the whole of life or the Utterness of the Dharma, we have to look into how, where and to whom all this takes place.

This brings us to the three existential spaces where the differentiation of individual qualities and environments occur. However, with regard to the first three of the ten such qualities as seen in the light of the original Buddha, such an appearance would be how the Daishônin looked like as a human being. In terms of the triple axiom of phenomenon (*ke*), the void of relativity (*kû*) and the middle way of reality (*chû*), then this phrase 'such an appearance' applies to the axiom of phenomenon. Such an inner nature is the mind and the utterness of the wisdom of the Daishônin which by being the nature of mind is the axiom of relativity or the void. As for the axiom of the middle way of reality we have not yet come to it. When the Buddha Shakyamuni expounded these ten such qualities in the Chapter on Expedient Means in the Dharma Flower Sutra, the ten realms of dharmas which I have just explained as well as the three existential spaces which I will explain shortly, were merely an assumption. I presume that the inclusion of the ten realms of dharmas was understood by the people who were listening at the time and maybe the existential spaces could have been taken for granted also, but at all events they are not mentioned in the sutric text. Scholars like Tendai took the view that Shakyamuni was only referring to the one thousand such qualities. That is to say a hundred

realms of dharmas possessed by the ten such qualities become a thousand such qualities. Since this concept of life only takes place in a subjective vision of it, it is seen as a temporary gateway to the dharma and as a teaching that belongs to events suspended in time and place.

Whereas one might think of the one instant of mind containing one thousand such qualities as a somewhat indefinable mass of psychological complexes and confusions. The three existential spaces are the boundaries that separate us from one another and also delineate the boundaries in which that existence occurs. Here, even though the illusion of materiality is built into the structure of our unenlightenment, the fundamental nature of all the appearances of existing are only mind and what we perceive in it is only knowing.

In the Buddha teaching there is no concept of an ego as in western psychology, instead there are the five aggregates (*go.on*), that overshadow any notion of awareness of our original state which is the utterness and simultaneousness of all space and all time. This synchronistic Utterness is specified as our fundamental dharma nature or as our basic enlightenment. Also this can be described as the primordial dharma nature that is the actual and unchangeable true suchness that is the basis of all existence.

In contrast we are also endowed with a fundamental bewilderment which due to our distraction from the fundamental dharma nature we find ourselves trundled away into the dreamlike delusions of unenlightenment. Since this unenlightenment is as fundamentally primordial as the dharma nature, here, I use the word primordial in the sense that these two qualities of enlightenment and unenlightenment have always been, always are and always will be in an ever present now. Here we can quote a passage from the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* to make this point clearer, 'Utterness (*myô*) is the dharma nature and dharmas (*hō*) are their respective unenlightenment. The single entity of unenlightenment and the dharma nature is called the Utterness of the Dharma (*myôhō*). The lotus flower (*rengé*)

are the two dharmas of cause and effect as a single simultaneous event.’ Judging by this statement, enlightenment and delusion exist side by side in a synchronicity as part of the fundamental whole, if it were not for our basic bewilderment which brings about our various dispositions (*gyô*) that are inevitably inherited from former existences. This leads to an awareness that we have an existence that is our own which entices us to invent (i) the materiality (*shiki*) of a body and its necessary physical surroundings. This is the first of the five aggregates that darken our original enlightenment. Our bodies also involve the five organs of sense which makes us (ii) receptive (*ju*) to sensations and feelings along with the functioning of the mind and senses in connection with affairs and things. Then through (iii) conception (*sô*), thought, discerning and the functioning of the mind in distinguishing. (iv) The mind’s volition (*gyô*) in its processes with regard to likes and dislikes, good and evil etc., brings about the mental faculty that makes us know (v) *shiki* who we are on account of our acquired knowledge and experiences.

Because the combination of these five aggregates are an existential space in themselves, it is said that this is what makes us separate individuals. It is also said, with the disappearance of the aggregate of materiality (*shiki.on*) after death which implies the loss of a body and its surroundings contributes enormously to our forgetting who we were in our previous lives.

Nevertheless even though materiality can also exist within its own physical surroundings we must now go further into the question of where existence takes place. The next existential space is called the existential space of sentient beings. The one thousand such qualities combined with the existential space of the five aggregates may well define what sort of individuals we are, but it is this existential space of sentient beings that is always the result of karma and is responsible for what our environments are to be.

According to Tendai’s *Desistance from Troublesome Worries in order to See Clearly*, the existential spaces of sentient beings are circumscribed according to the ten realms of dhar-

mas. Even though these explanations have a highly mediaeval flavour, it is easy to speculate as to how things would be in the twenty-first century. 'It is the red hot irons that are the make up of the dwelling place of the realms of the dharmas of the denizens of hell. The abodes of the realms of dharmas of animality are to be found on the earth, in water and in the air. The realms of dharmas of the ashuras abide along the sea shores or at the bottom of the ocean. The realms of dharmas of humankind dwell upon the earth. The realms of dharmas of the devas who represent the transient quality of ecstasies and joys live in palaces. The bodhisattvas who carry out the six practices that ferry sentient beings over the sea of mortality to the shores of Nirvana (*roku haramitsu*) live in the same places as humankind. The bodhisattvas of the interconnecting teachings (*tsukyô*) who have not yet overcome their delusions depend on the same living spaces as humankind and the devas. But those who have been able to sever their delusions about living and dying live on terrains that are an expedient means. The bodhisattvas of the particular (*bekkyô*) and all-inclusive (*enkyô*) teachings who have not yet exhausted their delusions about living and dying live in the terrains of expedient means among humankind and the devas, but those bodhisattvas of the particular and the all-inclusive doctrines inhabit the terrains of real reward (*jippôdo*) and the Tathâgatas dwell on the terrain of eternal silence and illumination (*jôjakkôdo*).⁷ Albeit, it may be worthwhile to mention that the Buddha of the Chapter on the Life Span of the Tathâgata in the Dharma Flower Sutra is always present in this actual world of ours that we have to put up with (*shaba sekai*), which for the enlightened is in no way different from the terrain of eternal silence and illumination. Obviously all these different terrains are subjective, hell can be in Buckingham Palace and terrains of expedient means can be an artist's studio or the ecstasy and joy of the devas can be at the Christmas party.

The Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishônin does not flatly state that dharmas do not exist, but that their reality is flexible. Nevertheless this teaching does emphasize that ma-

teriality and mind are not separate from each other and also it teaches that subjectivity has to have a dependent environment. In addition to that, the quality of our materiality or environment is entirely in accordance with the state of our minds which can be modified from moment to moment.

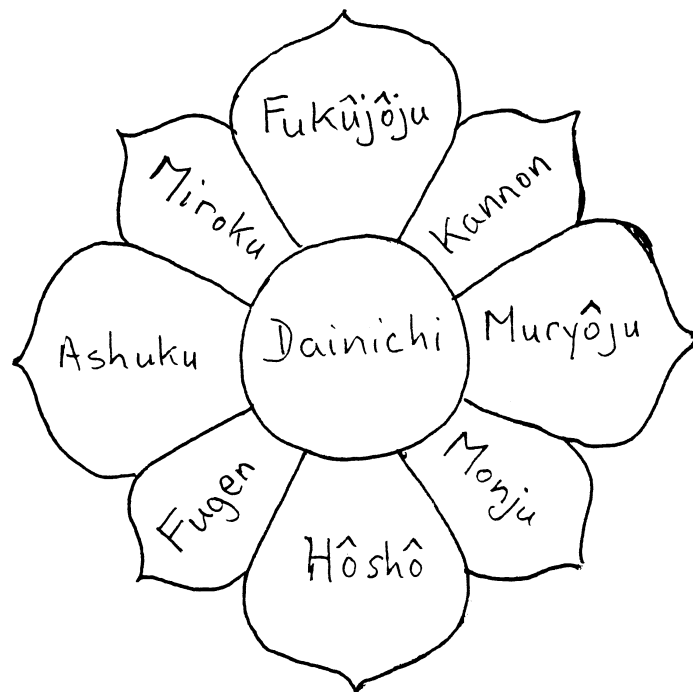
Now we come to the last of the existential spaces, that of abode and terrain. In reality this is the psychological and to a certain extent the physical barrier that lies between the denizens of hell, the hearers of the Buddha's voice or the people who spend their time in the realms of the dharmas of animality. Certain people are not really welcome into our lives or living spaces. This has more to do with a sense of preservation than any moral judgement. This one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces is always on the move according to the karmic circumstances that influence our lives from instant to instant.

Every single nano-second that is lived by each and every manifestation of life however small, the substance of their lives is mind that can only be the totality of mind. In some way or another it is the materiality of our brains or other simpler centres of psychic coordination that function as filters that only allow enough mind to seep through for biological or economic survival. Albeit even the tiniest scrap of mind contains the whole of mind, but due to each one of these existential spaces each individual mind has its unique window that looks out on to life as a whole.

A dirty bad-tempered stray cat can become a much endeared house pet due to karmic circumstances. Human beings, whoever we may be, can find fulfillment and happiness through our karmic relationship to faith and practice. Probably the next question is: faith in what? The answer is: faith in the existence of one's own Buddha nature which is also present in every single event and object in our lives. The one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces is the *myôhō*, the Utterness of the Dharma.

Before going into the question of the lotus flower being the simultaneousness of cause and effect, I would like you to

read an oral transmission from the Sacred Writings of Nichiren Shôshû (*Nichiren Shôshû Seiten*), not only is this writing a little known poetic vision of the lotus flower, but it also makes references to the eight-petalled lotus flower as being our own inherent Buddha nature. This text will also give the reader an idea as to how this lotus plant was seen in thirteenth century Japan:



‘To begin with if we are to think of inquiring as to where the Lotus Flower grows and as to what sort of pond, or in what sort of water, or in what kind of locality or in what kind of environment does this flower belong, then are we to suppose that it grows among snowy mountains of the North? Or is it in tepid pools among the fragrant hills of the South that we find this unimaginable and

ineffably wonderful flower, the great white lotus? Is this why we call it the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma? However that may be, the ponds of King Hoka-bara have lotus flowers that bloom with a thousand petals but those that flower among humankind have only about ten petals each. Above us in the heavens there are lotus flowers with a hundred petals and those of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas have a thousand. Should we, for this reason, call them the lotus flowers of the Utterness of the Dharma? Or again should we not try to find out if there are lotuses growing up from the Pool of the White Heron or the waters of Kunming?

You should carefully turn this matter over in your mind without further inquiring into the distance or searching in places that are far away. These Lotus Flowers grow in the breasts of sentient beings such as we. In the midst of its foul slush of evil karma and troublesome worries, the mind is endowed with the cause proper of the Buddha nature that is designated by the name of the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. The lotus flowers of the ordinary world only bloom in summertime but not the whole year round, they grow in muddy ooze and not on dry land. In the wind they sink beneath the passing waves, they close up when it is icy and wilt in the blazing sun. Nevertheless this is not the way of the Lotus Flower of the Buddha nature, by being the flower that is not limited by the past, present or future it keeps its petals throughout the four seasons of the year and by being the flower whose bounds are unlimited it flourishes in the six lower destinations of rebirth and the three realms of desire, materiality and the immaterial. Since this is the flower of the non-duality of good and bad it neither chooses the depth nor the shallowness of evil karma. Because it is the flower of the single suchness of right and wrong it germinates in the foul slush of troublesome worries and when it is grown it is neither buffeted by the ten evil winds nor is it submerged by the waves of the five deadly sins. The red lotus neither shrinks

back from the icy cold nor does it fade in the scorching heat. Even though, we are in possession of the Lotus Flower of our Buddha nature just as it has been described, we are intoxicated by the liquor of unenlightenment so that we are ignorant of its very presence within our bodies. By being beguiled by the murkiness of troublesome worries we are unawakened as to the real suchness of our own nature. This is like the poor woman who is oblivious of the treasure store in her own house and the *kirin* or dragon who is irritated by the jewel in his own body without knowing that it is of worth. At all events there are hidden things that we do not see like the Buddha nature in sentient beings or the moon behind the clouds, the gold in the earth or the flowers inside a tree. But there really is the Buddha nature stored within the hearts of sentient beings.

Previously we had the explanation of the meaning of the two ideograms for the Utterness of the Dharma, now it must be made clear what the Lotus Flower means. The words imply both the dharmic and metaphoric Lotus Flower [just as earlier there was both the dharmic and metaphoric Utterness of the Dharma]. Now the Lotus Flower of the actual fundamental substance has to be explained. Just as the metaphoric lotus grows out of the mire and remains unsullied, the Lotus Flower of the immaculate purity of our fundamental nature is not only unsoiled by muddy waters but is shown to be fully endowed with the fundamental substance and the functions of all the World Honoured Ones. The Lotus Flower of the actual fundamental substance abides in the breasts of all sentient beings in the form of a fleshy disc divided into eight parts. All those who have received life everywhere irrespective as to whether they are big, small, rough or delicate or as ungainly as crickets, ants, mosquitoes and horseflies, all of them have within their bosom this immaculately white eight-petalled Lotus Flower. In the eastern petal dwells the Buddha Ashuku [*Akshobhya*]; in the southern petal dwells the Buddha Hôshô [*Ratnasambha-*

va]. In the western petal there is the Buddha Muryôju [*Amitâyus*] and the northern petal is the abode of the Buddha Fukûjôju [*Amoghasiddhi*]. In the petal between the two astrological houses of the dragon and the snake which is the south-east resides the Bodhisattva Fugen; the petal in the south-western direction of the sheep and the monkey is the seat of Bodhisattva Monju; in the north-western direction of the dog and the pig resides the Bodhisattva Kannon and in the north-eastern petal there is the abode of Bodhisattva Miroku. All eight petals entail four Buddhas and eight Bodhisattvas, enthroned in the centre is the Tathâgata Dainichi who is the Buddha of the nine World Honoured Ones of the eight-petalled lotus. In actual fact this is what is known as the Buddha nature which can be none other than the Utterness of the Dharma.

In the eastern region all the Buddhas are comprised in the one Buddha Ashuku; in the western region all Buddhas are comprised in the one Buddha Muryôju and in the northern region all the Buddhas are embodied in the Buddha Fukûjôju so that all the Buddhas of the ten directions and of the past, present and future are all included among the nine World Honoured Ones in the eight-petalled lotus. In this manner sentient beings are exquisite stupas that comprise the innumerability of all the Buddhas. When it comes to ordinary mundane stupas, sentient beings are ignorant of this essential element, they have to be taught that our own bodies are indeed stupas that embody all the Buddhas and what this implies. People with sharper propensities would know that our bodies are analogous to the stupa of the realm of the dharmas. This is called the beginning of enlightenment. The eight-petalled lotus that lies within our breasts is called the Lotus Flower of the nine World Honoured Ones and Bodhisattvas upon it are called the Utterness of the Dharma. This pragmatic aspect of the teaching of Tendai should be studied in these terms; this is by far the most esoteric gateway to the Dharma. When we do talk of the minds of

sentient beings in this manner, it is then said to be the Dharma Flower Sutra. Therefore whenever we talk about the existence of the Precious Stupa in the Dharma Flower Sutra as not being real, then it has to be taught that the actual fundamental substance of sentient beings is just like the stupa of Tahô. Accordingly, since all sentient beings are stupas, then the killing of people is a fearful wrongdoing. There is not even a tiny insect that settles in the palm of your hand that is not fully endowed with the eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones. If you begin to grasp the significance of this then you will understand that should we fall into the flames of hell, then the eight-petalled Lotus Flower would also have to fall. If you, in the tiniest way, consider that our minds are endowed with the fundamental substance and the function of the World Honoured Ones, then you are all but on the threshold of enlightenment. Even if you were to fall into the path of the hungry demons and deeply suffer the pangs of starvation yet in some small way to seize upon the idea that in our hearts there is a stupa of the Buddha who is totally awakened to *Myôhō renge kyô* the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma, then this must be one's person not being separate from becoming a Buddha.

Since time immemorial the omnipresent ten realms of the dharmas are the shape of *Myôhō renge kyô*. This is how the eight-year-old Dragon King's Daughter in this manner fully realized what the Utterness of the Dharma was and without altering the actual fundamental substance of her female body she became a Buddha with her person intact. Therefore 'Of all the persons who hear the dharma there is not one who will not become a Buddha'. This is the disclosure of the principle that of all the people everywhere that hear the Dharma Flower Sutra, there is not a single one who will not be enlightened. In spite of there being the stupa of the eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones, through the one instant of thought dir-

tied by the bewilderment of an unenlightened attachment to fancies that cannot be cleared away, we become temporarily unknowing so that this lotus is hidden by life and death and its troublesome worries. When you hear it expounded in the Dharma Flower Sutra that your own mind is the actual fundamental substance of the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma with the fundamental substance and the function of the World Honoured One and that the citadel of your mind is the abode of the Stupa of Tahô, then the least understanding of this means that your person is not separate from becoming a Buddha.

What this teaching implies is in fact what can be made known and knowing it is what we understand. What we comprehend is again according to our knowledge. Therefore, even if you do not read the Dharma Flower Sutra yet never give up meditating upon it, then seeing it in this way, you are someone who practices the Dharma Flower. Albeit if you do not understand this argument, it is still a meritorious virtue. Furthermore when you know that the minds of all sentient beings are furnished with Buddhas of the eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones, you will, henceforth, always have the outlook of a person who practices the Dharma Flower Sutra, whether you are asleep or awake, you will be accompanied by the Buddha both day and night.

When you hear this gateway to the dharma without letting it slip from your memory and if you can hold faith in it and understand it, then your person is not separate from becoming a Buddha. We have inherited a personality which is in accordance to how we reacted to things in former lives. Again, according to the karma which our personalities bring about in this life will then be the fruition of how we become and react to things in lives to come. But by even having a tiny speck of understanding and faith in the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma, the Buddhas of the eight-petalled lotus of

the nine World Honoured Ones will reveal themselves and make an impression on future lives. You will acquire a Vajra body and dwell in the Lotus Flower of the citadel of your own heart. Then there is a text that says, 'On the contrary I do prostrate myself at the feet of all the Buddhas within my heart.' The Dragon King's Daughter whose person was not separate from becoming a Buddha, became universally and correctly awakened, was enthroned on the Unsullied Precious Lotus Flower of the southern regions. This means that she dwelt in the awareness of the revelation that the nature of her own mind was *Myôhō renge kyô*, the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. This would indicate that when faith and understanding become just a little stronger and flourish a little more, then even now, at this very moment, the Buddhas of the eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones, as a matter of course, reveal the light they emit and beam it on to the realms of the dharmas. This is why it says in the *Collection of Given Decisions*, 'Do not lose sight of the teaching on account of my personal indolence. The Dragon King's Daughter became endowed with the thirty-two physical marks of a Buddha and bore witness to the silence and illumination of perfect enlightenment on hearing the Sutra with undivided attention. What refers to all, can be singled out with one example since perceptive beings do think things out for themselves.' It is on this account that if your understanding and your clear insight into the sutra is lacking, then you will not be capable of becoming a Buddha with your person just as it is. So that there would be no reason for the Buddhas of the essence of your mind to reveal themselves in the lives to come. Therefore you must forge and hammer yourself into the shape of becoming a Buddha. In this context it is taught that you do not have to look for the peerless cluster of jewels since we ourselves already possess it. When you do come to fully understand this eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones you do not become a Buddha

even though you may be seated with the Buddha who has always been since the beginning, but it only takes a tiny shred of unenlightenment to obscure this understanding so that we may never perceive it again.

Now that we have come to the knowledge of the understanding which reveals that 'You do not have to look for the peerless cluster of jewels since we ourselves already possess it'. So we have Nangaku who says, 'The Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma is the Universal Vehicle which, if sentient beings practice just as it teaches, then they will, as a matter of course, attain to the Buddha path. For instance, sentient beings who have rebuffed goodness who are everywhere throughout the realm of dharmas, will decidedly, on a single hearing of the Dharma Flower Sutra, attain to a mind of enlightenment.' The eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones is also the essence of the mind of the slanderous person of incorrigible unbelief, the evil person who commits the five deadly sins or the ten acts that lead to evil karma. Should these people exercise a minimum of faith and understanding there is no doubt that they will become Buddhas and naturally attain to the Buddha path. While hell is just being hell, it is endowed with the World Honoured One with both his fundamental substance and function. The universal and impartial wisdom, by being the actual fundamental substance throughout the ten realms of dharmas of the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. Perpendicularly it reaches through the past, present and future; horizontally it embraces the whole of the ten directions and is totally unbiased towards the differences of things being high or low, great or small, coarse or delicate, because it is the universally impartial wisdom of the Dharma Flower Sutra. As the sole vehicle has been expounded in this manner then there can be no other path to attain; neither two nor three since it is called the sole dharma vehicle.

Indeed what an outstandingly superlative dharma gateway this is! It does not teach that the eight-petalled lotus of the nine World Honoured Ones only dwells within the breast of the masculine, it extols with a sigh that women also receive it in their feminine frames. If it expounded that only high-ranking people were endowed with stupas, then those of inferior rank would bear a grudge. Because this is the stupa of universally impartial wisdom, there could be no circumstance for a deviation from the truth. If the dharma becomes a single vehicle then there are no doubts concerning it. Although this is an easier dharma for becoming a Buddha, it was as long as forty years before Shakyamuni exposed this treasury of esoteric wisdom for fear that a simple explanation of universal significance of the dharma would reduce it to insignificance.

The meritorious virtue of building and setting up a hundred thousand stupas made of precious metals does not amount to the meritorious virtue of holding faith in, and understanding that our minds are stupas of the Buddhas, so that when sentient beings do evil things they are acts of perversity because sentient beings are the fundamental substance of the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. Therefore the enlightenment to this concept naturally consists in universal compassion. There is even great merit in giving up the seat of one's position so that others may be placed upon it. But how much more is the boundless meritorious virtue of rolling back one's own unenlightenment so as to reveal and know that the dwelling place of the five Buddhas and four Bodhisattvas is in the citadel of one's mind? The Buddha, on giving an illustration, said that the ox-headed sandal tree is among all the kinds of wood the most renowned, so that one ounce of this wood is said to cost four *mon*. It is a treasure that has the value of a world where the sun shines from dawn to dusk under the four heavens. The capacity of this wood is like a wand with the wish-fulfilling pearl that can make all the treasures that one desires, to come raining

down or to bubble up like a spring. If you lay out this wood when it gets cold it becomes warmer and if it is hot it becomes cool. People who are sick are cured at once. Those who are impoverished become independently wealthy and honourable. So what would be the meritorious virtue if one were to construct from this precious wood thirty-two halls whose height is that of eight fan palms with a width of thirty-nine *jô* and two *shaku* and then fill them with a hundred thousand fully ordained monks and members of the Order? Such a meritorious virtue would then be surpassed by myriads of billions of times in a single instant of understanding and faith in the Dharma Flower Sutra. All this has been recounted in the sixth fascicle of this canon.

Naturally it must be the same as that which has just been said, that since a hundred thousand myriad times that number of merits does not amount to the virtuous merit of one which indeed is to be relied upon. What this dharma amounts to is the reason for the Buddha coming into the world and is the direct path for all sentient beings, as well as the treasury of esoteric wisdom of all the Buddhas past, present and future. Since this is the justification and the circumstances for the sole purpose of the Buddha appearing in the world, the dharma that he expounded is of the ultimate significance. Nevertheless the Buddha expounded the Dharma Flower Sutra from the podium of possessing eternal Nirvana. Then what is the reason for sentient beings not understanding or having faith in it? Even Shakyamuni held it back for as many as forty years and taught the Flower Garland Sutra, the sutras of the teachings of the individual vehicle and the interrelated sutras instead so as to entice the various propensities of his hearers towards the exposition of the Dharma Flower Sutra and this is its meritorious virtue.'

Above all poetic and metaphorical considerations the lotus flower is the simultaneousness of cause and effect. The Dai-

shônin in his *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* makes this clear when he says, ‘... The lotus flower is the two dharmas of cause and effect, as well as being the oneness of cause and effect... The lotus flower is the Buddha entity of the nine world honoured ones of the eight-petalled lotus.’

Would this not be the part of us that lives all space all time which must include the past, present and future, the part of us that cannot be destroyed, is it the very essence of life itself? However many lives or deaths we have had and will have to go through or however much pain and suffering we may have had and may have to suffer in the future, it is on account of this simultaneousness of cause and effect that brings about the substantiation of our own inherent Buddha nature and at the same moment makes the Buddha nature manifest in all the plants, trees and all the things and people that surround us.

Now we come to the word ‘sutra’. One of its most common interpretations is ‘the thread of the discourse’. However the Daishônin in his explanation of *Nam myôhô renge kyô* at the very beginning of his *Oral Transmission*, defines it as, ‘... the realms of dharmas are the sutra’. Among the many meanings attached to the Chinese ideogram *kyô* that is equated with the word ‘sutra’ as well as its Tibetan counterpart ‘*mdo*’, this concept includes the warp of a fabric and things running lengthwise such as meridians etc. It is probably due to the never ending vertical threads of the warp in weaving, that this ideogram acquired a secondary nuance of something that lasts forever such as a scriptural canon or a philosophical classic.

Be that as it may, but if we use this ideogram for sutra in the light of the doctrines of Shakyamuni, then it was at the first council on Spirit Vulture’s Peak in northern India not long after the Buddha’s demise into Nirvana, the Venerable Ânanda (Japanese: Anan) was asked to repeat from memory all the teachings that the Buddha had expounded during his fifty years of preaching. It was because of Ânanda’s outstanding memory that he was able to reconstitute these orally transmitted discourses and have people write them down.

Each one of these Buddha teachings begin, ‘As I heard upon a time’, and since then this phrase has been used as a token to validate a discourse and call it a sutra.

It is within the Buddha teachings of Nichiren Daishônin whose education was almost entirely in classical Chinese, rather in the same way Latin was used in thirteenth century Europe, that we see the profundity of the word sutra extended to a far greater significance than a mere discourse. The way people used to read at the time of the Daishônin was not like the way we read an Agatha Christie novel in the train, because of the content of the larger part of mediaeval writings had something to do with the meaning of life, readers projected the whole of their psyches into whatever was written as a part of their search for an inner realisation. I am firmly convinced that the way the Daishônin read all his books was by thoroughly pondering over the significance of each and every ideogram in whatever text he was examining as though he was determined to find evidence to confirm his own enlightenment. For the Daishônin, *Myôhō renga kyô* were not only five ideograms that made up the title of the sutra of the same name, each ideogram is a word. A convenient translation would be ‘The Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma’ but a far profounder interpretation of this title would be ‘the vertical threads of the sutra into which is woven the filament of the simultaneousness of cause and effect of the entirety of existence’. In this way this title becomes the ‘title and theme’ (*daimoku*).

The word *Namu* is the Chinese version of the Sanskrit word *Namas*. The apt translation of this word is based on the Universal Teacher Tendai’s definition of it which is ‘to consecrate and found one’s life on’. In Japan this expression of devotion or dedication is to be found inscribed on the images of every kind of bodhisattva, deva or Shinto divinity. But nothing could be more deeply meaningful than consecrating and founding our individual lives on the very essence of life itself. This is the particular significance of the recitation of *Nam myôhō renga kyô*. This is the lion’s roar as the Daishônin

expresses it in his *Oral Transmission*, 'The lion's roar is the Buddha's exposition of the dharma, the exposition of the dharma is the Dharma Flower Sutra and in particular it is *Nam myôhō renge kyô*.'

According to the teachings of the Schools of Nichiren, sentient beings possess nine modes of cognition (*kyûshiki*). The first five correspond to our faculties of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touch: (i) the cognition of sight (*kenshiki*) depends on the organ of the eye and its function is to discern shape, colour and form, (ii) the cognition of hearing (*nishiki*) depends on the organ of the ear and its function is to discern and pick out sounds, (iii) the cognition of smell (*bishiki*) has the function of discriminating odours, fragrances and stench, (iv) the cognition of taste (*zesshiki*) depends on the tongue whose function is to discern various tastes and flavours, (v) the cognition of touching (*shinshiki*) and feeling depends on the body whose rôle is to discern every variety of physical contact, (vi) the cognition of conscious mental activity (*ishiki*) is the consciousness and the awareness of what we are feeling and perceiving with regard to what is going on around us. The first five cognitions have their own organs to detect whatever they are supposed to sense whereas the cognition of mental activity is dependent on the mind as an organ of thought. Perhaps one could say I know I am seeing but that, in fact depends on the mind. (vii) The cognition of the mind as an organ of thought (*manashiki*). This cognition is in fact a little more complicated, since it has a strong power of attaching itself to the result of its own thinking. This cognition constantly perceives images, sounds, tastes etc., even if they are only imagined, all of which induce this cognition to presume that it is the controller of the body and the part of us that makes decisions. It also sees itself as being independent by nature. The cognition of mind as an organ of thought first wills, then it discriminates (*funbetsu*) in order to judge. The process of judging entails an awareness of the individual particularities in concepts, ideas and in matters and things. Hence this cognition's habit of firmly attaching itself to a

subjective and objective view of existence. The cognition of mind as an organ of thought is always functioning even during our sleep, unconsciousness and comas etc. As a result unenlightened people such as we, are always prey to illusions and ideas about our own existence. Which to all intents and purposes belong to the nine realms of dharmas (*kyûkai*) that constitute our unenlightenment in the world of the dream. (viii) The storehouse cognition (*arayashiki*) strictly speaking is not a cognitive faculty and has no discerning powers of its own, rather its rôle is accumulative. This storehouse cognition is the source of the previous seven cognitions which are produced from 'messages' (*shûji*) that are implanted in it. This storehouse is a sort of universal unconscious that stockpiles every conceivable dharma that is available to us, whether it be physical or mental, including the concept of our own bodies. When this storehouse cognition receives the outcome of the messages from the other seven cognitions it passes these messages on to the cognition of conscious mental activity (*ishiki*), which in turn holds onto these impressions and discerns them as being real. In this sense the storehouse cognition is the basic element of the individual who mistakenly interprets the cognition of conscious mental activity as the sum total of the self. On this account we have the tendency to think that we are what we know. The storehouse cognition is also the part of us that stores up the whole of our past and present karma. This deepest basement of our personalities also accompanies us through all our cycles of living and dying, it is through the distorted notion of being what we know, that we become susceptible to deep traumas in the intermediate existence between death and rebirth which tend to create distorted archetypes in our psyches. The scars of these deepest traumas from previous deaths may even assist in obscuring any intuition we may have with regard to our original enlightenment. At any event the storehouse cognition hoards up the whole of our existence whose real identity is (ix) the immaculate cognition (*amarashiki*) which is the fundamental of life itself.

This ninth cognition is not really a way of perceiving since this particular cognition is the origin of all dharmas and mind, at the same time it is the track upon which our lives roll. The object of most Buddha teachings suggests through one practice or another that the people who carry out these practices should shake themselves free of the storehouse cognition that is tainted with illusions and return to the original state of the superlative and absolutely pure real suchness, which is the immaculacy of pure mind as the self nature of existence. In other words it is the cognition of the Buddha which is the original enlightenment. This immaculate cognition is also seen as the sovereign of the mind and the foundation of all its workings. By being the real suchness, it is what life really is and completely inalterable. All things both sentient and insentient are endowed with this quality. In the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin this ninth and immaculate cognition is the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. To be a little more explicit but perhaps not simpler this sutra consists in the vertical threads of the loom where existence takes place into which is woven the filament of the simultaneousness of cause and effect of the entirety of life itself. The Daishônin defines this dimension of ourselves as the ninth cognition that is the capital of the real suchness and the sovereign of the mind. Since this aspect of ourselves is not merely an emptiness filled with light but is also replenished with all the archetypal urges that pulsate throughout existence. It is through Nichiren Daishônin's all embracing compassion for all sentient beings that made him draw up a mandala which includes all our primordial forces set in perfect proportion and in perfect relation to each other just as they are in the Dharma Flower Sutra. In this way ordinary people who are burdened with karma as we all are, can discover that this ninth cognition is our real identity. The Daishônin's intention was to show us a pathway that would lead to a real individuation which is referred to in Buddhist technical language as the opening up of our inherent Buddha nature with our persons just as they are. This psychologically alchemical process can be set about

through reciting *Nam myôhō renga kyô* in front of this mandala which for those people who follow these teachings is the Fundamental Object of Veneration.

The next question is, how are we to understand this practice in terms of the twenty-first century? Traditionally the answer is through faith, but here we must make a distinction between faith and belief. Here in the western world we are faced with the problem of not knowing the Japanese language. It is only in this essay or in the translations that follow, that I know of any reasonable translation of *Nam myôhō renga kyô* which is, 'The consecration and founding of our lives on the vertical threads of the sutra where existence takes place into which is woven the filament of the simultaneousness of cause and effect of the entirety of existence that are the utter limits of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces.' Then of course we can translate *Nam myôhō renga kyô* literally which is, 'To consecrate and found our lives upon the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma', the meaning of which the Daishônin has explained with precise clarity in his *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra* (part one). From here on we can say that the only place upon which we can found and consecrate our lives is the whole of life itself. I can also take on trust that all the Buddhas of the past, present and future based their practice on reciting at least something that had the same meaning as the 'theme and title' (*daimoku*) of the Dharma Flower even if they were not the precise words. What we are really talking about is the recitation of a paramount psychological truth. Where there is no subjective mind, such places cannot be explored. The boundaries of perception are always limited by the mandala like circles that are created in the depths of the unconscious and in most cases not even that.

I would say that nowadays in educated western societies there are very few thinking and enquiring people who do not accept the subconscious of Freud and the collective unconscious of Jung as a part of our normal cultural heritage. Then would not Jung's archetype of the crock of gold at the bottom

of the ocean not be the immaculate cognition I mentioned a few passages ago? Is this not the source from which all culture, mythology and faith comes from? Is this not the immaculate cognition squeezing and squirming through the various deep down archetypes of our minds, in order to impart to us that our respective identities are not who we think we are, but in fact we are none other than life itself? No doubt this is what the Bodhisattva Jôfukyô, in the Twentieth Chapter of the Dharma Flower Sutra, saw in anybody who was a monk or a nun or either a layman or female lay follower. He said, 'I really admire you. How could I be arrogant and look down on you? Since you are all practising the path of the bodhisattva, you will certainly attain to the Buddha harvest.'

It is not beyond the bounds of the imagination that there is an immaculate essence that is all space, all time which includes the past, present and future that is the real embodiment of what life really is, yet at the same time is not separate from people like ourselves who due to our fundamental unenlightenment find ourselves living lives that are not without problems. This is what makes us ask the question, 'How and why did I get here and what can I do about it?' The simple answer would be to have enough trust in the Buddha teaching to accept the fact that we have a Buddha nature just in the same way we have an unconscious along with our usual complexes and quirks. This would be a basis for faith. But it is not faith if we blindly listen to or take to heart inanities such as we find in some silly books that say, 'the *Gohonzon* (i.e. the Fundamental Object of Veneration) is the body and mind of the Daishônin himself, it is not different from a living human being...' Then this is the way to piousness, bigotry, blind belief and a life that is cold, narrow and nasty. Often it is in the circles that pretend to have faith in the teaching of Nichiren Daishônin where there is far too much sanctimoniousness and not enough faith.

In order to understand why we are the way we find ourselves in the world of humankind, the Buddha teaching describes this situation in a chain of twelve causes and karmic

circumstances that run through the whole of sentient existence: (i) *mumyô*, this is the part of us that does not want to know, that does not want to change our ways. It is our fundamental unenlightenment that leads to (ii) *gyô*, the dispositions and volitions inherited from former lives which are carried over to (iii) *shiki*, which are the first signs of consciousness that takes place in the womb after conception. This then leads to (iv) *myô*, *shiki*, the body and mind evolving in the womb. The body then develops (v) *rokunyû*, the five organs and cognitions of sense as well as the cognition of conscious mental activity. After birth this leads to (vi) *shoku*, which is contact with the outside world. This opens the way for (vii) *ju*, receptivity and budding intelligence and discernment from six to seven years onwards. At the age of puberty we then develop (viii) *ai*, the thirst and yearning for love and amorous relationships. All this leads to (ix) *shu*, the urge for an existence in which desires, hopes and ambitions are fulfilled, but even if these desires are not accomplished we come to (x) *yû*, that is the substance of karma to come in the future. Then we come to (xi) *shô*, the completed karma ready to be born again. Naturally, this life is now irrevocably facing in the direction of (xii) *rô*, *shi*, old age and death. The Daishônin explains this karmic process in his *Essay on the Chain of the Twelve Causes and Karmic Circumstances that Run through the Whole of Sentient Existence*.

Since people who live in the Western Hemisphere are endowed with a healthy dose of doubt as well as a tendency to ask how or why the Fundamental Object of Veneration is seen to have the properties it does, the answer has to be, 'It is the people who do the practices of the Nichiren teachings who invest the Fundamental Object of Veneration with the qualities it has.' What this basically amounts to is the faith of the practitioners in the existence of their own Buddha nature. This of course is also true for all the crosses, images of saints, Buddha images and any other object that is thought of as being holy. But in the same way as beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, the numinous quality of an object of worship resides

in the faith of those people who hold it sacred. Faith can bring about an intuitive understanding, deeper insight can lead to greater faith and as a follower of the teachings of the Daishōnin, a deep faith can make us aware of our inherent Buddha nature without becoming something different from what we are, even if this may only happen at the time of our deaths.

However that may be, the Fundamental Object of Veneration is as it is defined in the Second Consideration of the religious ceremony of the Nichiren Shōshū school, which is as follows, 'I consecrate my life to the essence of the Chapter on the Life Span of the Tathāgata of the original gateway : the universal dharma that lies esoterically submerged within the text : the subtle integration of the objective realm and the subjective insight of the original terrain that is so hard to understand : the primordial infinity of the original beginning : the actual fundamental substance of the self received reward body that is used by the Tathāgata : the inherently infinite existence of the ten realms of dharmas, the pragmatic one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces : the oneness of the person and his dharma : the one and only Universal Fundamental Object of Veneration of the altar of the precept of the original gateway.'

Now having quoted all this, obviously I must now give the reader some explanations, starting with the essence of the Chapter on the Life Span of the Tathāgata. This is the Sixteenth Chapter of the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Uttermost of the Dharma in which Shakyamuni refuted the concept that he had attained enlightenment for the first time in Bodhgaya under the bodhi tree in northern India. Instead he announced that he already had become enlightened in the dimension of the original source of existence in the primordial infinity in time which is the synchronicity of cause and effect that perpetuates throughout the whole of existence. This chapter begins with three exhortations where the Buddha says, 'Indeed you must sincerely give your attention to having faith and accepting what the Tathāgata says.' The Buddha was about to repeat this phrase a fourth time when the Bodhisattva

Miroku said three times over, 'World Honoured One, we only wish to hear your teaching, we do indeed accept with faith what the Buddha says.' After this ritual of the Buddha announcing that he would teach without being asked to, a situation which throughout all the Buddha teachings is extremely rare, the Tathâgata said, 'You must listen attentively to what I have to say about the extent of the esoteric and almost inaccessible reaches of the mind of the Tathâgata.' The Buddha then goes on to say that his enlightenment existed prior to a period of time that would amount to all the grains of dust that would go into the making of five hundred kalpas. Rather than being an immense distance in time, I would suggest that we really are talking about a very great psychological depth. This statement is referred to as, 'the clearing away of what is close at hand in order to reveal the distance.' The life span in the title of this chapter alludes to the longevity of the Buddha as being all time which is an inherently infinite existence that includes all the past, present and future. Even though this infinity is expressed in terms of a time that is like a long piece of string or perhaps as a circle instead of a synchronicity. This is the meaning of the Chapter on the Life Span of the Tathâgata that is esoterically submerged within the text. The original gateway to the dharma is the second half of the Dharma Flower Sutra. The first half of this sutra concerns itself with teachings and events that are suspended in space and time and therefore only temporary, whereas the original gateway to the dharma points to things that exist in the original state that is more like a profound dream that unfolds to us psychological truths as to the nature of our real existence. Another important point is that apart from the Buddha stating that his life is inherently eternal, he also said that he is always present in 'this world that has to be put up with' (*shaba sekai*), which means that there is no other Buddha terrain apart from the world we are living in now. The Chapter on Expedient Means of the Dharma Flower Sutra emphasizes that the dharma realm of the Buddha is present in all the other nine realms of dharmas of ordinary people. But in the Chapter on the Life Span of the

Tathâgata, it is pointed out that these realms of dharmas are also endowed with that of the Buddha.

Now we come to the subtle integration of the objective realm and the subjective insight of the original terrain that is so hard to understand which points to the Buddha vision that is also latent in each one of us, when our lives are open to the implications of *Nam myôhō renge kyô*. This subtle integration of the objective realm, *kyô*, and the subjective insight, *chi*, of the original terrain as seen on the Fundamental Object of Veneration as we stand looking at it, the subjective insight is on the left and its objective realm is on the right.

After the subjective insight of the Tathâgata and his perceived environment we then come to the ‘primordial infinity of the original beginning’. This paraphrase is a clumsy attempt to translate *ku.onganjô*.

Although this concept of primordality is expressed as the starting point in a time that has been unrolled like a very long piece of string it is so long it can only be counted as something prior to a time span which would exceed the amount of grains of dust that go into the making of five hundred kalpas. Generally speaking a universal kalpa is considered to be the stretch of time between a big bang and a big crunch, where it is said that all space and all time becomes a singularity.

Be as it may, the Buddha teaching is less concerned with physics than psychology. The infinity of this original beginning is the ever present space where all existence becomes a synchronistic singularity that is deep down within our psyches and yet at the same time it is every instant of life. This part of us which is the origin of life contains all the archetypal urges of the immaculate cognition, the contents of which are written out on the Fundamental Object of Veneration.

With regards to the actual fundamental substance of the self received reward body that is used by the Tathâgata, I said somewhere further back in this essay that all Buddhas are endowed with three bodies: (i) the dharma body is the ultimate truth to which the Buddha is enlightened, (ii) the reward body is the embodiment of the Buddha wisdom and, (iii) the

corresponding body is the incarnation that the Buddha manifests according to the needs of sentient beings in order to teach them. The actual fundamental substance of the self received body that is used by the Tathâgata entails the wisdom to which the Daishônin was enlightened in the primordial infinity of the original beginning. The Fundamental Object of Veneration is the means with which the Daishônin imparts that wisdom.

Next we come to the element which is referred to as the inherently infinite existence of the ten realms of dharmas. In contrast to the four noble truths of (i) being born, (ii) becoming old, (iii) getting sick and (iv) dying as taught in the individual vehicle, or the appearances of the four stages of existence (*shiûisô*) of (i) coming into being or being born, (ii) lasting as long as it lasts, (iii) change and disintegration and (iv) ceasing to exist, the ten realms of dharmas are inextricably a part of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces. I cannot imagine where life was or what it was when our planet was little more than a miasmatic clod or what life will be when the earth ceases to exist. Of course the Buddhist argument is that any perception whatsoever is the reflection of our own minds. Does this mean to say that there is a part of our minds that creates an all embracing history of evolution, speculation as to the future, all that is known about the subatomic particles everything that can be known even though it is somewhat blurred at the edges, is this entirely the product of the five aggregates and the nine cognitions? The answer then, would have to be that each and every sentient being lives out the simultaneousness of cause and effect of the Utterness of the Dharma according to their own karmic propensities. In this light our own existence becomes imponderably inexplicable. What is even more astounding is that each instant we live is only a transient individual glimpse at the past, present and future of the entirety of existence. The problem that always arises is, 'What is going to happen to me?' To this question I would say that when one can realise that the personalities that we have forged for ourselves according

to our respective karma are only the psychological means for surviving a single lifetime and that our real identity is life itself, then this is why the Daishônin wrote out in three dimensional realistic terms all the possible twists, turns and alterations of the one instant of mind containing three thousand existential spaces onto this Object of Veneration whereupon we can project and focus our faith in our Buddha nature in order to help us get out of this inherently schizophrenic situation.

The oneness of the person and the dharma means that within the Buddha teaching of Nichiren Daishônin there lingered a dual concept of a Fundamental Object of Veneration that represents the dharma and a Fundamental Object of Veneration that refers to the person (the Daishônin) who established that dharma. In order to make clear that the Fundamental Object of Veneration is the oneness of the wisdom, intellect, profundity and all embracing compassion of the Daishônin is in no way apart from the dharma that he taught, the following phrases as well as others from the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma are quoted to envince this position. The first quotation comes from the Chapter on the Teacher of the Dharma, 'Wherever this sutric scroll of the dharma is placed for keeping, one should build a stupa made of the seven precious substances which has to be proportionately as tall as it is broad, but there is no reason to put any relic inside it. For the simple reason the whole of the body of the Tathâgata is already in the stupa.' The second quotation comes from the Chapter on the Appearance of the Stupa made of Precious Materials, 'Among all the sutras, this sutra is the first of all, if there is anybody who can hold to this dharma then that person is holding to the person of the Buddha himself.'

With regard to the Only Universal Object of Veneration of the altar of the precept of the original gateway, it would be simpler if I were to discuss first, the one and only original gateway which is in the second consideration in the booklet of daily practice of Nichiren Shôshû. In these translations the word gateway is a literal translation of the Sino-Japanese

ideogram whose implication in these sort of texts, is a gateway to the Buddha dharma. From the viewpoint of the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin this original gateway points to the *Nam myôhô rege kyô* of the 'three universal esoteric dharmas' (*sandai hihô*).

These three universal esoteric dharmas are, (i) the Fundamental Object of Veneration, (ii) the title and theme of the original gateway to the dharma which is *Nam myôhô rege kyô* and (iii) the altar of the precept of the original gateway which is where the Fundamental Object of Veneration is enshrined.

Just as there are still at the present time people who obsessively read the *Bible*, *Finnegan's Wake*, J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll or in my case I read over and over again the Writings of Nichiren Daishônin and other related material, an obsessive activity which is really a quest to bring about some kind of individuation as well as revelations that help us to understand what life is all about. This is precisely what the Daishônin did with the teachings of the original gateway as well as the rest of the Dharma Flower Sutra. He projected his whole psyche into the depths of the text and after reading and pondering and pondering and reading again and again, the sutra yielded its esoteric secrets. Usually in the writings of the Daishônin we have the original gateway whose meaning lies submerged within the text, so that the title and theme (*daimoku*) is so much more than its literal translation.

What is written on the Fundamental Object of Veneration of the original gateway is the full content and significance of the Dharma Flower Sutra in the form of a mandala that has something of the flavour of a cosmic equation. The content of which we will discuss in detail during the next few paragraphs. The title and theme of the original gateway is the *Nam myôhô rege kyô*, that is to be understood as the consecration and founding of one's life on the vertical threads of the sutra that constitute the realms where existence takes place, into which is woven the filament of the simultaneousness of cause and effect of the Utterance of the Dharma. In other words we

are consecrating and founding our lives on the ever continuous now of single instants of mind that contain three thousand existential spaces in order to bring us to a greater awakening of the Buddha wisdom which is inherent in all of us. It could even be said that this is the consecration to what life really is.

The altar of the precept of the original gateway is the altar where the Fundamental Object of Veneration is enshrined. Since there is only one universal object of veneration of the original gateway, then it can only be the one and only Universal Object of Veneration of the altar of the precept (*Nam myôhō renge kyô*) of the original gateway.

For those people who are not familiar with the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin, the Fundamental Object of Veneration is an upright oblong shape upon which the forces that underlie our lives are written out in a ceremonial calligraphy with the exception of two Sanskrit syllables written in the Siddham alphabet. There are essentially two types of Fundamental Objects of Veneration, one is engraved on wood with gilded engraved letters with a black background, the other type is in the form of a traditional kakemono.

For fear of vilification, mockery and slander, people including the monks are averse to the concept of any diagram representing or reproduction of the Fundamental Object of Veneration whatsoever. So what I will do, is to try and describe its essential contents in words only.

大持国天王

大広目天王

大毘沙門天王

大増長天王

In the four corners of the Fundamental Object of Veneration there are the four universal deva kings in the service of Taishaku (*Shakra Devânâm Indra*) whose rôle in terms of the ancient Indian view of the universe, is to protect the four continents of Mount Sumeru. Perhaps in more present day terms, would they not be something to do with the forces that prevent our planet coming too close to or drifting too far away from the sun? Could they not be the forces that keep our environment from completely getting out of hand? I have to say that I personally accept the fact that there are forces of good that do protect us, but at the same time I cannot clearly define what the devas (*ten*) are, again it is the same with the 'spirits of good' (*zenjin*). We can be aware of their beneficial influence without really knowing what is happening or how it occurs, but one can also say the same thing about evil presences. According to the first sentence of the first consideration of the 'morning ritual' (*gongyô*), it says, 'Those born into mortal form who are "utterly enlightened" (*myôgaku*) which is the practical benefit of the original Buddha's own practice...' So that if we are to go by this phrase, even if the devas do have extremely long lifetimes like our planet, according to all accounts from other Buddhist writings, they must be individual beings endowed with very special merits. My personal way of understanding the devas is that they are archetypal forces within us who do have a bearing on our daily lives. However that may be the rôle of the universal deva kings on the Fundamental Object of Veneration is to protect the universe, pick out and punish evil and to encourage all efforts that people make to become enlightened.

南
無
妙
法
蓮
華
經
日
蓮
御
判

In the centre of the Fundamental Object of Veneration there is the inscription of the seven ideograms for *Nam myôhō renge kyô* under which is written **Nichiren** and under that there are the two ideograms *gohan*. These two ideograms generally imply, this mandala is the Daishônin's understanding of the Sutra on the Lotus Flower of the Utterness of the Dharma. The calligraphy of the central inscription is written in a particular style that is called 'the bearded theme and title' (*higedaimoku*). The reason for this I can only assume is that since the title and theme are chanted in a particular solemn manner, because of its all embracing importance for those who follow the teachings of Nichiren Daishônin. Another reason might be, the recitation of the title and theme in this tone of voice forestalls it from becoming trite. This would make me think that it is for similar reasons such a distinctive style of writing is used for nearly all inscriptions of *Nam myôhō renge kyô*. The only comparison I can refer to are the many Taoist inscriptions that are written in a similar style.

On the left hand side of the inscription of title and theme as one looks at the Fundamental Object of Veneration (which is in fact the right hand side as the Object of Veneration faces us), we have the Buddha Shakyamuni. On the right hand side (again and as always in this essay as we are looking at the Fundamental Object of Veneration) we have the Tathâgata Tahô (*Prabhûtaratna*). This Buddha appears in the Stupa made of Precious Materials during the ceremony in empty space, in order to bear witness to the truth of the teaching of the Buddha Shakyamuni with regard to the Dharma Flower Sutra. According to the Eleventh Chapter on the Appearance of the Stupa made of Precious Materials, the Buddha Tahô came from a Buddha land called Treasured Purity. When this Buddha was still involved in the fifty-two bodhisattva stages in the process of becoming a Buddha he made an oath that on attaining enlightenment or even after his demise into Nirvana, he would appear in the Stupa made of Precious Materials in order to testify the truth of the Dharma Flower Sutra wherever it is being taught. In the eleventh chapter of this sutra the Tathâ-

gata Tahô opens the stupa and invites Shakyamuni Buddha to sit next to him.

In the *Threefold Transmission Concerning the Fundamental Object of Veneration (Honzon San Sôden)*, that is a personal transmission from the Daishônin to one of his original disciples Nichigen, the reciprocal rôles of both Shakyamuni and Tahô are described in the following manner, 'At the time of the Precious Stupa when Tahô as the object of the Buddha wisdom and Shakyamuni as that wisdom itself, sat in the one stupa it was to show us the fundamental origin of the non duality of the Buddha wisdom and its respective environment. Then what is this Buddha wisdom and its respective environment? It is none other than the continuity of births and deaths that we have acquired since the primordial infinity until now. It is the environment and the wisdom of mind and materiality, it is the stillness and movement of a thousand blades of grass and ten thousand trees. Tahô, by already having entered Nirvana, implies death and inanimation, Shakyamuni who has not yet entered Nirvana, represents life. When the duality of movement and stillness refers to materiality and mind, then mind becomes motion and materiality silence. This is because Tahô is our aspect of death as we pass from one death to another and Shakyamuni is our living form from life to life. The two Buddhas seated in the one stupa implies the inseparability of living and dying as not being separate in any way from death and reincarnation. What this means is that life and death are the single reality of the Universal Nirvana which is also *mu* (the dharma realm that is the underlying fundamental quality of all existence which can only be perceived through deep psychological perception or at the time of dying). This Universal Nirvana is underlined by neither coming into being nor being extinguished. If reasoning and wisdom are put together, then Shakyamuni represents our reception of sensation and feeling the functioning of the mind or senses in connection with affairs and things (*ju*). Also our concepts, thoughts, discerning and the functioning of the mind in distinguishing (*sô*), as well as our functioning of the mind with

regard to our likes and dislikes, good and evil and so forth (*gyô*). Along with the mental faculty that makes us think we are who we are on account of what we know (*shiki*) are the make up of the four aggregates and the basic make up of our minds. Because it is the mind that has the function of turning over and being in motion. The dharma is expounded through Shakyamuni. Tahô is the unenlightenment of our materiality, because materiality is silent Tahô does not teach the dharma. For those who can grasp the meaning of this, then without affecting our materiality and mental faculties or our bodies and minds in any way, we are entirely Shakyamuni and Tahô. This is explained in the temporary gateway, as becoming aware of our inherent Buddha nature is not separate from our respective personalities just as they are. In the original gateway it is taught as, 'Since I really became a Buddha it is already coming to countless and boundless and hundreds and thousands of myriads of billion of nayuta asogi kalpas ago.' In other words our real existences consist of the synchronicity of all the past, present and future and all space.

[6]	[5]	[2]	[1]	[3]	[4]
安	淨	釈	多	上	無
立	行	迦	宝	行	辺
行	菩	牟	如	菩	行
菩	薩	尼	来	薩	菩
薩		仏			薩

On both sides the two Buddhas Tahô ([1] in the diagram) and Shakyamuni [2], there are the four leaders of the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth (*jiyu no bosatsu*). Next to the Tathâgata Tahô [1], we have the bodhisattva Jôgyô (*Jôgyô Bosatsu*) [3] who along with the other four leading bodhisattvas first appear in the Fifteenth Chapter on the Bodhisattvas who Spring from the Earth in the Dharma Flower Sutra. According to the *Threefold Transmission Concerning the Fundamental Object of Veneration* it says, 'Jôgyô [3] is placed next to Tahô [1] which is something to do with Indian protocol of the host attending to the guest of honour. (Because it is the Buddha Tahô's [1] stupa) the Tathâgata Tahô [1] is seated in the place of the host, Jôgyô [3] as presiding elder of the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth, assumes the supporting function of host.' The Daishônin sees the Bodhisattva Jôgyô [3] as the temporary or provisional manifestation of the original Buddha of the primordial infinity while the ceremony in empty space was being conducted. Nichiren Daishônin refers to himself as the reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Jôgyô in quite a number of his writings. Again according to the *Threefold Transmission*, the title and theme along with the four leaders of the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth represent the five elements earth, water, fire, wind and the relativity of the void. The title and theme *Nam myôhô renge kyô* represents relativity which is not different from the Universal Nirvana and the Bodhisattva Jôgyô stands for fire. The name Jôgyô means 'the supreme practice'. Dôsen of the Tendai school wrote in his *Collection of Notes on the Textual Explanation of the Dharma Flower*, that each of the four leaders of the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth symbolizes a principal quality of the Buddha of the primordial infinity. In this case Jôgyô indicates the original Buddha's identity or self (*ga*) as well as fire.

Although the Fundamental Object of Veneration has all the attributes of the Buddha of the primordial infinity, it always depends on the faith of the practitioners in their own

Buddha nature, that is to say in life itself if they wish to have access to the inner realisation of this teaching.

Standing on the right of Jôgyô [3], as we look at the Fundamental Object of Veneration is Muhengyô [4], who is also one of the leaders of the Bodhisattvas who spring from the earth. His name means 'the Practice of Boundlessness', and also represents permanence or continuity as one of the principal qualities of the Buddha. In the first part of the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower*, the Daishônin states, 'Going beyond the bounds of annihilation or continuity is called the Practice of Boundlessness'. Also out of the five elements, Muhengyô [4] stands for earth.

On the left hand side of Shakyamuni [3] who is the guest of honour in the ceremony in empty space, is Jyôgyô [5] who is also one of the leaders of the Bodhisattvas who spring from the earth and like all the other four, is mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter on the Bodhisattvas who Spring from the Earth in the Dharma Flower Sutra. In the *Oral Transmission on the Significance of the Dharma Flower*, the Daishônin refers to these four bodhisattvas as representatives of the principal qualities of the Buddha, by saying that since the name for Jyôgyô [5] is written with the ideogram for immaculacy (jyô), the fundamental and particular quality of the Utterness of the Dharma is said to be immaculately pure and without taint. This bodhisattva also stands for water.

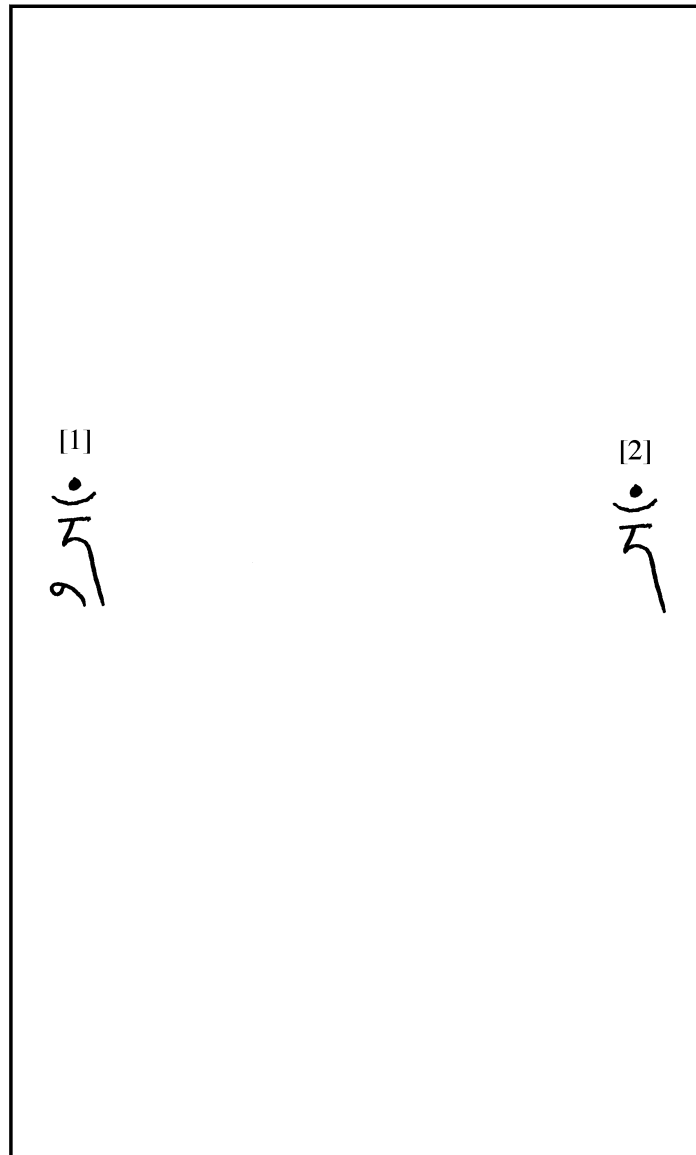
On the left of Jyôgyô [5] we have Anryûgyô [6], whose name signifies 'the practice that establishes tranquillity'. Just like the other leaders of the bodhisattvas who spring from the earth, Anryûgyô [6] is mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of the Dharma Flower Sutra. In terms of representing the principal qualities of the Buddha of the primordial infinity this bodhisattva represents his joy and happiness. There is no such thing as an enlightened being that is brow beaten and depressed. In terms of the five elements Anryûgyô represents wind.

Jung in his writings suggests that archetypes of the collective unconscious are subject to a variability which is dependent on the individual. Although our personal archetypes do

change their aspect, the archetypes of the immaculate cognition are immutable. It is true that we can only become aware of the collective unconscious through its manifestation in art, religion and the occasional dream etc., but we know at the same time this is what makes us what we are. The immaculate cognition is not only the underlying engine that makes all our unconscious activities do their daily task, it is also the cognition (*shiki*) that makes us perceive the state of our own fingernails or see the bird on the tree.

In the *Threefold Transmission* it goes on to say, ‘The single teaching is the one and only doctrine of the Dharma Flower Sutra. The profound significance is the unfathomable subtlety of these five ideograms for *Myô*, *hō*, *ren*, *ge*, *kyô*; this is why we refer to them as being profound and because of their deep meaningfulness we use the word “significance”. Broadly speaking the essential of the twenty-eight chapters of the Dharma Flower Sutra is none other than the five ideograms of the objective realm and the subjective insight of the Utterness of the Dharma. Even though the temporary and original gateways each attach significance to the non duality of the Buddha wisdom and its environment, the view that the temporary gateway discusses the transformation of delusions into a first awakening like that of Shakyamuni under the bodhi tree, it can be surmised that wisdom is able to destroy our bewilderment and its expression is the establishment of the gateway to enlightenment through that wisdom. Thus we have Shakyamuni on the left hand side [as we face the Object of Veneration] who stands for wisdom. The original gateway talks of the original enlightenment as being inseparable from its own conduct, therefore inherently it cannot break the bonds of having a lust for life. The original gateway entails this fundamental principle which is why Tahô is on the right to represent it. However these two jointly correlate and bring to completion the Buddha wisdom and its objective realm, materiality and mind, discernment and what is discerned and also life and death. This is called the subtle integration of the objective realm and the subjective insight of the original terrain (*honchi*

kyôchi myôgo). You should also realize that the rest of the inscribed names on the Fundamental Object of Veneration follow the same pattern.'



Half way down both sides of the Fundamental Object of Veneration, there are two letters of the Sanskrit Siddham alphabet. On the left, [1] there is the syllable *Hûm* that symbolizes the Ferocious Manifestation of the Sovereign of Enlightenment Aizen (*Aizen Myôô*) who is also called King Aizen (*Aizen Ô*), the Tathâgata Dainichi (*Dainichi Nyôrai*), another name for him is the Bodhisattva Kongôai (*Kongôai Bosatsu*) or the Bodhisattva Kongôô (*Kongôô Bosatsu*). In iconography King Aizen is represented as being red with three eyes, six arms and a ferocious expression, in one arm he is holding a bow and an arrow. Although this Buddha emanation has his origins in the Shingon or Esoteric school, here in the Fundamental Object of Veneration he represents ‘troublesome worries not separate from enlightenment’.

On the right hand side [2] opposite to the Ferocious Manifestation of the Sovereign of Enlightenment Aizen, there is the syllable *Ham* which is the invocation of the Sovereign of Enlightenment called Fudô (*Fudô Myôô*), whose name implies immutability who also is usually seen in his ferocious manifestation (*funnu no sô*). This sovereign of enlightenment is one of the principal Buddha emanations that is venerated by the Shingon school and is by some people thought to be an incarnation or emanation of the Tathâgata Dainichi himself, as well as being the head of all the other eight sovereigns of enlightenment. The rôle of Fudô is to overcome the obstacles and demons that stand in the way of those who follow the practices of the Buddha teaching. He is normally depicted as having a body of the colour of indigo and a frightening appearance, in his right hand he holds a sword, in the left there is a rope that he uses as a snare and is surrounded by an aura of flames. In the *Threefold Transmission*, these two Sovereigns of Enlightenment have an extremely profound meaning.

‘Next, with regard to the two Ferocious Sovereigns of Enlightenment, King Aizen Tainted with Amorous Desire is the embodiment of troublesome worries being inseparable from enlightenment. He is coloured red which is the shade of desire for beauty and pleasure. If one is to think about the

process of the desire for beauty and fun not being separate from the Buddha nature, this is precisely the concern of this Ferocious Sovereign of Enlightenment. Then we have the Ferocious Sovereign of Enlightenment Fudô the Unmoveable who is the embodiment of the endless cycle of lives and deaths that are inseparable from the Universal Nirvana. This Sovereign of Enlightenment is coloured indigo black which is the darkness of the inaccessibly congealed inner realm of the inalterable karma of living and dying. This is what Fudô the Ferocious Sovereign of Enlightenment represents. So we have Aizen acting as meditation and Fudô as the object of meditation. What Fudô and Aizen emphasize are the two dharmas of meditation and what is meditated upon are in fact the two dharmas of our wisdom and its objective realm, these dharmas are none other than our fundamental make up which is the Utterness of the Dharma.'

Maybe a way of understanding Fudô the immoveable who looks across the Fundamental Object of Veneration through the space between the ideogram for lotus and the ideogram for flower towards Aizen who is tainted with desire, could mean that there is a psychological simultaneousness of cause and effect which involves the whole of life and everything that has, is and will happen. Could this not be the point where the whole of mind becomes a singularity of meaning that makes it the flashpoint that renovates our lives? Could this also be the clear light that we become for a very short while every time we die? Then as we flinch away from it, we once again become entwined in the dharmas in the dream of the ever reoccurring sticky trap of life? But nevertheless we are renewed.

What we do have to realize is that our troublesome worries are not separate from our original enlightenment.