

Bucknell University

Bucknell Digital Commons

Faculty Contributions to Books

Faculty Scholarship

Fall 11-1-2022

Zen Internationalism, Zen Revolution: Inoue Shūten, Uchiyama Gudō and the Crisis of (Zen) Buddhist Modernity in Late Meiji Japan

James Mark Shields
jms089@bucknell.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bucknell.edu/fac_books



Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), [Buddhist Studies Commons](#), [History of Religion Commons](#), [History of Religions of Eastern Origins Commons](#), [Intellectual History Commons](#), [Japanese Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Shields, James Mark, "Zen Internationalism, Zen Revolution: Inoue Shūten, Uchiyama Gudō and the Crisis of (Zen) Buddhist Modernity in Late Meiji Japan" (2022). *Faculty Contributions to Books*. 262.
https://digitalcommons.bucknell.edu/fac_books/262

This Contribution to Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Scholarship at Bucknell Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Contributions to Books by an authorized administrator of Bucknell Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dcadmin@bucknell.edu.



Chapter 12

Zen Internationalism, Zen Revolution

Inoue Shūten, Uchiyama Gudō, and the Crisis of
(Zen) Buddhist Modernity in Late Meiji Japan

JAMES MARK SHIELDS

Introduction

In his foreword to Paul Carus’s *Gospel of Buddhism* (1894), Donald Lopez Jr. provides a summary of the essential features of “modern Buddhism”:¹

Modern Buddhism seeks to distance itself from those forms of Buddhism that immediately precede it and even those that are contemporary with it. Its proponents viewed ancient Buddhism, especially the enlightenment of the Buddha 2,500 years ago, as the most authentic moment in the long history of Buddhism. It is also the form of Buddhism, they would argue, that is most compatible with the ideals of the European Enlightenment, ideals such as reason, empiricism, science, universalism, individualism, tolerance, freedom, and the rejection of religious orthodoxy. It stresses equality over hierarchy, the universal over the local, and often exalts the individual over the community.²

While Lopez’s understanding of modern Buddhism clearly resonates with the work of a great number of Asian and Western Buddhist reformers, from Anagarika Dharmapala (1864–1934) through B. R. Ambedkar (1891–1956)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40



1 to Stephen Batchelor, in a Japanese context it is in fact more reflective of
 2 the early period of Buddhist modernism—characterized by the figures of
 3 the so-called Buddhist Enlightenment, including Inoue Enryō (井上円了,
 4 1858–1919) and Kiyozawa Manshi (清沢満之, 1863–1903)—than of the
 5 middle and late periods as represented by the more politically progressive
 6 and doctrinally experimental New Buddhist Fellowship and Youth League
 7 for Revitalizing Buddhism, respectively. This is especially true of Lopez’s
 8 final feature: the exaltation of the individual over the community.

9 Here, Juliane Schober’s more recent remarks are pertinent:

10

11 Many theorists writing on modernity and civil society presume
 12 that the western model of religion in modern, civil society
 13 applies equally to non-western cultures and their religious
 14 traditions. Yet modernizing reforms of religion do not inevitably engender individualism, a Protestant ethic [*sic*], the development of capitalism, and the relegation of religion to the private sphere.³

18

19 In fact, religious modernism in Asia (and perhaps elsewhere) seems to
 20 lead to a “maximalist” understanding, in which religion is “the central
 21 domain of culture, [and] deeply involved in ethical and aesthetic practices
 22 constitutive of the community,” in contrast to a “minimalist” approach,
 23 whereby religion is restricted, in Weberian and archetypically “modern”
 24 fashion, “to the private sphere and metaphysical concerns.”⁴ It goes without
 25 saying that the minimalist approach is well-suited to liberal understandings
 26 of the separation of “church and state” as well as—if somewhat less evi-
 27 dently—neoliberal capitalist injunctions to self-define through production
 28 and consumption (i.e., work and leisure). The “maximalist” perspective
 29 is, on the other hand, resonant with both conservative (especially fascist)
 30 views and those of the far left, which either dismiss religion or subsume
 31 it within broader categories of feeling and behavior. It is certainly the case
 32 that in Japan, this expansion/dissolution of the religious *imaginaire* was true
 33 of both “reactionary” and “progressive” modernisms. In short, we might
 34 say that while Lopez’s summary applies, to some extent, to all forms of
 35 Buddhist modernism, it remains heavily inflected with assumptions that
 36 are more specifically germane to Buddhist modernism as constructed
 37 by Western Buddhists—and thus we must be cautious in applying it to
 38 “indigenous” forms of Buddhist modernism (while acknowledging that all
 39 forms of Buddhist modernism are, to some extent, “hybrid”).

40

With this important caveat in mind, this chapter examines the lives and thought of two rather different radical Buddhists of late Meiji Japan, both of whom were affiliated with the Zen tradition, in order to discern whether and in what ways their progressive political ideals were influenced by Chan/Zen thought and practice. It will also contextualize progressive Zen thought within contemporary debates, particularly the lay-oriented Zen modernism emerging at the same time in the line that runs from Imakita Kōsen (今北洪川, 1816–1892) through Shaku Sōen (釋宗演, 1860–1919) to D. T. Suzuki (aka Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙, 1870–1966).

The New Buddhist Fellowship

The best example of an early and “moderate” form of Buddhist modernism in Japan is the New Buddhist Fellowship (J. Shin Bukkyō Dōmei, 新仏教同盟; hereafter, NBF). Established in 1899, in the wake of the first Sino-Japanese War and the emergence of new social forces and contradictions brought on by several decades of Westernization as well as industrial capitalism, the NBF was made up of a dozen young scholars and activists, many of whom had studied under Buddhist Enlightenment figures Murakami Senshō and Inoue Enryō.⁵ The New Buddhists were fiercely critical of the “old Buddhism,” which they believed had been complicit in the conservative forces that had thus far inhibited progress in Japan, particularly in the areas of education and ethics. While the fellowship was overtly lay-oriented, several of the New Buddhists had been ordained as Buddhist priests, and most had some sort of Buddhist educational background, especially via the Nishi Honganji branch of the Shin (Pure Land) sect. Although he spent a large part of the period of the NBF’s existence abroad in the United States, one member of the group would come to have tremendous influence on postwar Zen: Suzuki Teitarō (Daisetsu), known to the West as D. T. Suzuki.

While many of the New Buddhists were, like the young Suzuki, moderately liberal in their political views, the final few years of the journal reveal an increasing attention to the thought and practice of socialism. In addition, these years saw contributions to the journal from many of the leading radicals of the day, including Kōtoku Shūsui (幸徳秋水, 1871–1911), Sakai Toshihiko (堺利彦, 1871–1933), Ishikawa Sanshirō (石川三四郎, 1876–1956), and Shirayanagi Shūko (白柳秀湖, 1884–1950). Of all the New Buddhists, those who were sympathetic to socialist thinking

1 were Takashima Beihō (高嶋米峰, 1875–1949), Mōri Saian (毛利柴庵,
2 1872–1938), Sugimura Sojinkan (杉村楚人冠, 1872–1945), and Inoue
3 Shūten.⁶ Of these, Inoue most strongly identified with the Zen tradition and
4 thus provides the first of our two cases of “progressive Zen modernism.”

5 6 7 Inoue Shūten: Buddhism, Socialism, and Pacifism

8
9 Born in 1880 into a merchant family in Tottori prefecture, Inoue was sent
10 to Sôtō Zen temple at the age of nine.⁷ After learning English at a young
11 age from American missionaries, in 1895, while most of his eventual New
12 Buddhist confreres were gravitating toward Inoue Enryō’s Tetsugakkan
13 (哲学館), he entered Sôtōshū Daigakurin (曹洞宗大学林; today, Komazawa
14 University), beginning a course of study in Indian philosophy under the
15 direction of Riku Etsugan (陸鉞巖, dates unknown), with whom he soon
16 undertook an extensive series of travels throughout south China, Ceylon,
17 Burma, and India. In 1903 he published his journal of these experiences,
18 entitled *Conditions in India* (J. *Indo jijō*, 印度事情). While in Ceylon, Inoue
19 met with Sinhalese Buddhist reformer Anagarika Dharmapala. After a brief
20 stint serving as an army interpreter at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese
21 War (from which he was discharged due to tuberculosis), he took a teach-
22 ing position at a Christian women’s university, Kobe College. This was the
23 same period (1905) in which he joined the New Buddhist Fellowship. In
24 later years, Inoue would be employed by both the American and British
25 consulates-general and helped to translate several books written by British
26 diplomats on Japanese religions.

27 Like his fellow NBF travelers Watanabe Kaikyoku (渡辺海旭, 1872–
28 1933) and Suzuki Daisetsu, Inoue’s thought and activities drew heavily on
29 his experiences abroad, but whereas Watanabe and Suzuki spent most of
30 their time in Western Christian countries (Germany and the United States,
31 respectively), Inoue visited primarily Buddhist nations in East, South, and
32 Southeast Asia. These travels, in concert with his studies under Riku, led
33 to a sustained interest in Theravāda Buddhist traditions and particularly
34 the virtue of *ahimsa* or nonviolence, which would become foundational
35 to his lifelong commitment to pacifism.⁸

36 While Inoue’s pacifism thus appears to be rooted in a combined
37 personal and academic interest in South and Southeast Asian Buddhist
38 traditions, it was bolstered by the writings of the fledgling socialist move-
39 ment, which by the time of the Russo-Japanese War had become virtually
40

the only antiwar voice remaining in Japan. In 1906, not long after joining 1
 the NBF, Inoue became a member of a socialist organization, the Kobe 2
 People's Club (J. Heimin Kurabu, 神戸平民倶楽部). Through this affiliation 3
 he would become well connected to various radicals, establishing personal 4
 contact with Taixu (太虚, 1890–1945), the well-known Chinese Buddhist 5
 reformer (and erstwhile anarchist sympathizer), as well as Uchiyama Gudō, 6
 the Zen monk who was arrested and executed in 1911 for his alleged role 7
 in the plot to assassinate the Meiji emperor known as the “High Treason 8
 Incident” (J. Taigyaku jiken, 大逆事件). As a result, Inoue was classified as 9
 a key witness regarding the incident and was, along with the other New 10
 Buddhists, put under government surveillance for a period.⁹ 11

In his writings, Inoue is strongly critical of late Meiji and Taishō 12
 government policy, particularly what he viewed as Japanese imperial 13
 aggression in Asia. At the same time, he denounces the emergence of 14
 so-called Imperial Way Buddhism, associated especially with the Zen sect, 15
 but emerging as the dominant way of thinking about the ideal relationship 16
 between Buddhism and the modern Japanese state. This would lead Inoue 17
 to criticize fellow New Buddhist Suzuki Daisetsu, who, in his acceptance 18
 of the necessity of state censorship and allowance that Buddhists could be 19
 effective soldiers, arguably helped pave the way for the spread of Imperial 20
 Way Buddhism in the succeeding decades.¹⁰ While it is beyond the scope 21
 of this chapter to examine Imperial Way Buddhism or Suzuki's role in its 22
 development (following, it is often argued, the lead of his mentor Shaku 23
 Sōen), the growing split between progressive Buddhists like Inoue and those 24
 like Suzuki who, while also adhering to modernist ideals and frequently 25
 espousing liberal and even socialist principles, were far more supportive 26
 of the emerging imperialist ideology, bears our attention. In the case of 27
 Inoue, at least, it seems clear that in addition to studies of principles such 28
 as *ahimsa* in Theravāda Buddhism, his personal experience of war played 29
 a significant role in his unwavering commitment to a pacifist stance. 30
 As Moriya Tomoe writes: “Unlike Suzuki's abstract notions of warfare 31
 and the ‘spiritual’ soldier, Inoue critically reports the cruelty and lack of 32
 spirituality among military officers as well as the fallacies of politicians 33
 during the Russo-Japanese War.”¹¹ In addition, however, an argument can 34
 be made that Inoue shared a more properly “maximalist” understanding 35
 of Buddhism that transcended not only sectarian distinctions but the lines 36
 between religion, philosophy, morality, and politics. 37

The most representative of Inoue's essays is “Ordinary, Extreme 38
 Pacifism” (J. “Heibon kiwamaru heiwaron,” 平凡極まる平和論), published 39
 40

1 in the December 1911 edition of *New Buddhism* (J. *Shin bukkyō*, 新仏教),
 2 in the immediate aftermath of the High Treason Incident. After noting
 3 the difficulties of advocating for peace during times of conflict, amid
 4 heightened feelings of nationalism (as anyone doing so is quickly labeled
 5 a “socialist” or “anarchist”), Inoue provides his own view of war:

6

7 No matter what name is given to it, war is the greatest sin (J.
 8 *mujō no zaiaku*, 無上の罪惡). If we were to euphemize war by
 9 placing upon it the crown of righteousness, then we might as
 10 well praise a whore for her chastity. Since the act of war is an
 11 evil vocation in and of itself, we have no need to distinguish
 12 between just and unjust wars on the basis of such things as
 13 objectives or intentions. That is to say, the inhumane (J. *fujin*,
 14 不仁) act of war, with its massacres and carnage—performed
 15 only to make a profit—is in fact millions of miles removed
 16 from the path of humanity (J. *jindō*, 人道).¹²

17

18 These remarks show that Inoue’s pacifism emerges from a moral,
 19 religious, or humanist ideal rather than a purely pragmatic or utilitarian
 20 one—a perspective that distinguishes him from the well-known American
 21 Unitarian pacifist (and eugenicist) David Starr Jordan (1851–1931), the
 22 so-called Doctor of Peace (J. *heiwa no hakase*, 平和の博士) who plays
 23 the role of a foil for Inoue in this essay. Jordan was well known for the
 24 argument that warfare causes literal, physical “degeneration” among the
 25 citizens of a militaristic nation. While agreeing that war does cause “decay”
 26 in the “nobility” (J. *seiei*, 精英) of a nation’s people, Inoue charges Jordan
 27 with “superficiality” on this point: “It is not the fact that warfare robs a
 28 nation of its nobility that makes war evil. War would still be evil even if
 29 it did not have that effect.”¹³ And yet, despite the clear moral grounds,
 30 Inoue here fails to situate his moral critique of warfare in specific Buddhist
 31 ideas or doctrines. The closest he comes is to argue in the conclusion that
 32 “peace” is, in fact, the final goal of all religion and that any pacifist theory
 33 that does not root itself in religion is of little value to the real world.¹⁴ In
 34 fact, while Inoue does make an explicit call for Buddhist monks, along
 35 with Christian priests, to join his peace crusade, the only “religious” ideas
 36 he cites are from the Confucian tradition: a passing reference to *jin* (仁),
 37 benevolence or humaneness; and an extended quote from Mencius on
 38 the connection of war to a mindset focused on profit rather than virtue.¹⁵

39

40

At the same time, beyond the perceptive and quasi-Marxist understanding of the intricate connection between war and an expansionist economy, the most striking aspect of Inoue's argument for "extreme pacifism" is his "universalist" (i.e., explicitly anti-imperialist and antinationalist) conception of human brotherhood, one he insists is shared by both Buddhism and Christianity (not to mention most modern anarchists and socialists). As Moriya has argued, Inoue utilizes religion in a critical capacity; his "harsh criticism of structural injustice shows that he considered the existing socio-political authority as secondary to the Buddhist teachings."¹⁶ Once again, this distinguished him from Suzuki, who had by this time begun to formulate an understanding, akin to that of Shin sect reformer Kiyozawa Manshi, of religious experience that leaves little room for a distinction between religion and "reality"—and thus allows little space for criticism.¹⁷ This raises the question of the limits to "maximalism"—one that seems to have political resonance. In short, if a maximalist understanding is pushed toward a metaphysical monism, it becomes very difficult to critical perspective on the actions of individuals or groups, let alone construct a politics of resistance. Inoue, like most of the New Buddhists and all later Buddhist progressives, did not extend their maximalism toward what more recent Critical Buddhists would call "totalism," a religio-philosophical stance that *assumes* a fundamental harmony or unity that is often manifested in the nation-state. Along these lines, it is surely no coincidence that the very issue of *New Buddhism* in which Inoue's above article appeared was one of those banned by the government.¹⁸

Uchiyama Gudō: Self-Awakening to Freedom

Of all the radical Buddhists of the prewar era, Sōtō Zen priest Uchiyama Gudō (内山愚童, 1874–1911) is probably the best known in the West, not least because he is discussed as the most striking exception to the rule of Zen collaboration with twentieth-century militarism in Brian Victoria's *Zen at War* (1997).¹⁹ Among Japanese scholars, too, Uchiyama's case has long fascinated, due both to its tragic ending and, one suspects, to the character of the protagonist, who seemed well suited to the role of heroic martyr.²⁰

Born in 1874 in the village of Ojiya, Niigata prefecture, in his youth Uchiyama apprenticed to his father as a carver of wooden statues,

1 including Buddha statues and family altars. A bright student, he showed
 2 an early indication of his later political leanings by identifying strongly
 3 with the semilegendary tale of Sakura Sōgorō (佐倉惣五郎; also known
 4 as Sōgo-sama 佐倉様, 1605–1653), the early Edo-period “martyr” who
 5 was executed after appealing to the shogun for help to ease the hardship
 6 of the peasants in his village.²¹ Indeed, the area in which Uchiyama was
 7 raised (former Echigo province) had a long tradition of rural poverty, as
 8 well as a deeply ingrained tradition of peasant revolt.²² Upon the death
 9 of his father in 1890, Uchiyama set off on a series of travels throughout
 10 the country, looking to further his education, which had been cut short
 11 at the elementary level. He spent some time in Tokyo, where he may have
 12 stayed at the house of Inoue Enyrō, the Meiji Buddhist Enlightenment
 13 reformer who was a distant relative of Uchiyama’s mother.²³

14 While Inoue Shūten was undergoing a course of study that would lead
 15 him to South and Southeast Asia, in 1897 Uchiyama ordained as a Sōtō
 16 Zen monk. Achieving the rank of abbot in 1904 at the age of twenty-nine,
 17 he took up the position of head monk at Rinsenji (林泉寺), a temple in
 18 the mountains of Hakone, Kanagawa prefecture, where he immediately
 19 focused his attention on helping his mostly poor parishioners. It was at
 20 this time that Uchiyama began to develop his ideas about Buddhist social
 21 organization, looking back to an idealized Chinese Chan sangha as a model
 22 of simplicity and communal lifestyle.²⁴ Around the same time, Uchiyama
 23 encountered the anarchist and socialist ideas that were beginning to spread
 24 on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War. In particular, he was inspired by the
 25 ideology of the left-wing *People’s Paper* (J. *Heimin shimbun* 平民新聞), to
 26 which he contributed his own declaration of principles in a piece entitled
 27 “How Did I Become a Socialist?” which was published in the January 17,
 28 1904 issue. In this brief essay, citing various Buddhist texts, including the
 29 *Diamond Sutra* and *Lotus Sutra*, Uchiyama insists on a fundamental link
 30 between (Mahāyāna) Buddhist teachings and socialism.

31 Through his contact with the *People’s Paper* and his acquaintance
 32 with Dr. Katō Tokijirō (加藤時次郎, 1858–1930), chief editor of the short-
 33 lived but influential *Straight Talk* (J. *Chokugen*, 直言) newspaper, Uchiyama
 34 was introduced to leading socialists Kōtoku Shūsui and Sakai Toshihiko.
 35 In the five-year period between 1901, when the first socialist party was
 36 established in Japan, to 1906, when the Japan Socialist Party (J. Nihon
 37 Shakaitō, 日本社会党) was founded, socialists had gained considerable
 38 public support, due in no small part to their firm antiwar stance during
 39 the Russo-Japanese War. Despite, or perhaps because of this growth in
 40

support, the factions within the broader progressive movement were growing stronger, represented by Abe Isoo (阿部磯雄, 1865–1949) and Katayama Sen (片山潜, 1859–1933) in the Christian, “idealist” and more reform-minded faction (J. *gikai seisakuha*, 議会政策派) on the one hand, and Kōtoku and Sakai in the antireligious, materialist, and more openly revolutionary—but also more abstract and intellectual—wing (J. *chokusetsu kōdōha*, 直接行動派).²⁵ Despite being a religionist with close ties to poor farmers, Uchiyama sympathized more strongly with the Kōtoku faction. Facing pressure from the government crackdown on left-wing movements following the Red Flag Incident (J. Akahata Jiken, 赤旗事件) in June 1908, he purchased equipment to set up his own underground press within Rinsenji (under the altar of *shumidan*, 須弥壇), with which he produced socialist pamphlets and tracts in addition to his own writings. As a result, in May 1909 he was arrested for violating publication laws, and, upon a search of Rinsenji, police claimed to have discovered a cache of materials used to make explosive devices. Implicated, along with twenty-five others, in the Kōtoku or High Treason Incident, Uchiyama was convicted and executed on January 24, 1911. According to witnesses, he was serene and even smiling as he climbed the scaffold.

Uchiyama’s priestly status was rescinded by the Sōtō Zen leadership in June 1910, five months after his death, and the sect took great pains to distance themselves from Uchiyama and his ideas, organizing a series of meetings in the months following the renegade priest’s death in which over one hundred Sōtō sect leaders, government administrators, and prominent intellectuals (including Inoue Tetsujirō, 井上哲次郎) denounced both the man and his work, pledging themselves to the principle of “revere the Emperor, protect the nation” (J. *sonnō gokoku*, 尊皇護国).²⁶ This decision was eventually reversed and an apology issued by the organization—eight decades years later, in 1993.

Of all four Buddhist priests convicted in the High Treason Incident, Uchiyama was the most actively involved in “subversive” (i.e., socialist and antigovernmental) activities—thus his punishment was harsher than the others. Moreover, he left behind more writings on his beliefs than they did. Unlike Suzuki, Inoue, and many of the New Buddhist Fellowship, Uchiyama was not a scholar of Buddhism, sociology, politics, or economic theory. Yet, like his Buddhist modernist contemporaries and epigones, Uchiyama struggled to establish doctrinal links and reinterpretations of Buddhist teachings to suit the perceived needs of his times.²⁷ Here I turn to a brief analysis of two representative works by Uchiyama: *In Commemoration of*

1 *Imprisonment: Anarcho-communist Revolution* (J. *Nyūgoku kinen museifu*
 2 *kyōsan kakumei*, 入獄紀念・無政府共產・革命) and *Ordinary Self-awakening*
 3 (J. *Heibon no jikaku*, 平凡の自覚).

4 *Anarcho-communist Revolution* was the first work published by
 5 Uchiyama's secret press. Uchiyama made a thousand copies, which were
 6 distributed throughout Japan. It was this work, more than any other, that
 7 would lead to his arrest and implication in the High Treason Incident.
 8 Regardless of Uchiyama's direct involvement, the tract apparently inspired
 9 Miyashita Takichi (宮下太吉, 1875–1911), one of the apparent ringleaders
 10 of the High Treason Incident, to carry out his plans.²⁸

11 The main theme of the pamphlet is the problem of rural poverty,
 12 a central concern of Uchiyama's work. While this was also a problem
 13 addressed by some of the New Buddhists—including Inoue Shūten—the
 14 difference in both the tone and the structure of the argument quickly
 15 become apparent, as Uchiyama moves quickly into a scathing critique
 16 of the economic and political system, given that it allows for a very few
 17 to monopolize the labor of the vast majority, who work with no hope
 18 of reward. The subtitle *Why do Tenant Farmers Suffer?* (J. *Kosakunin wa*
 19 *naze kurushiika*, 小作人ハナゼ苦シイカ) indicates the implicit connections
 20 between Uchiyama's chosen theme and his Buddhist commitments. As a
 21 Buddhist, he felt compelled to seek the causes and conditions of suffering
 22 in order to eliminate them by whatever means necessary.

23 What were these conditions? Marius Jansen gives the following
 24 account of the life of a typical tenant farmer during the Edo period—cir-
 25 cumstances that despite the Meiji Restoration and incipient industrialization,
 26 had changed little by Uchiyama's time:

27
 28 The tenant . . . shared few of the public rights and the
 29 duties of his landlord, and he lived under severe economic
 30 dependence. His plot was usually too small to give him the
 31 opportunity of accumulating anything, and the house in
 32 which he lived, and the tools he used, were probably not his
 33 own. Paternalism, vital for his life, was expressed in lan-
 34 guage, deportment, and deference summed up in his status
 35 as *mizunomi*, or “water drinking” farmer. The landlord was
 36 his “parent person,” *oya-kata*, and he the landlord's *kokata*
 37 or child.²⁹

38
 39 Here we see that the suffering of tenant farmers was both material and
 40 psychological—as they were reduced to near total dependence on their

oya-kata (親方).³⁰ Yet, while Uchiyama was a staunch advocate of land reform, this alone would not be enough to solve the dire problem of rural penury. Decisive actions must be taken by the oppressed themselves to cut off the source of suffering at its roots. To this end, Uchiyama advises tenant farmers to actively resist by refusing to deliver rice and pay taxes. Later in the tract, he goes even further, recommending that farmers refuse military conscription and encouraging them to denounce the emperor system based as it is on a “superstition” rooted in “mistaken ideas.”

What, if anything, can we find in Uchiyama’s vision that is specifically “Zen,” as opposed to more generally Mahāyāna Buddhist? Is there any evidence that Uchiyama saw Zen as particularly well suited to anarcho-communism? Uchiyama often invoked catchphrases that implicitly draw connections between Buddhism and socialism, though these tend to be broad doctrines rooted in the early Mahāyāna texts, and thus to a large degree foundational for all East Asian Buddhist sects. If we were to choose a single text that brings together these themes, it would be the *Lotus Sutra*—a foundational text for several East Asian schools such as Tiantai/Tendai and Nichiren but also deeply respected within other Mahāyāna streams, including Zen.³¹ Thus, while we might argue that Uchiyama’s vision is one with roots in Zen doctrine, we have to admit that it is not by any means a vision exclusive to Zen (though, given the manifest hybridity of Japanese Buddhism, even prior to modernity, this should hardly come as a surprise).³² Although Uchiyama makes no direct reference in this pamphlet to any specific Buddhist text or doctrine, we can interpret Buddhist connections from several of his expressions and ideas. Perhaps the most conspicuous of these is the unusual phrase *anraku jiyū* (安楽自由; lit., comfort and freedom), which appears at several key points in the piece and may be understood as a motto for Uchiyama’s Buddhist-socialist vision.

There may also be “Zen” significance to Uchiyama’s close identification with anarchism and the Kōtoku faction of the progressive left. Though it would remain loosely defined from its first appearance in late Meiji through the 1920s, the appeal of anarchism—as opposed to Marxism or other forms of socialism—to young Japanese radicals of the period can be best understood in terms of: (a) its focus on individual freedom and liberty from all constraints—moral or political; and (b) its emphasis on “direct action”—as opposed to social reform.³³ John Crump defines “anarchist-communism” as it developed in Japan in the Taishō period as “a revolutionary theory and practice which seeks to establish, by means which from the outset transcend the state, a society where individual freedom is

1 reinforced by communal solidarity and mutual aid.”³⁴ Though it requires
 2 some measure of interpretive verve, one can see how a Buddhist—and
 3 particularly a Zen—case could be made for these priorities as well.³⁵ In
 4 time, as anarchism and Marxist socialism eventually split (albeit much
 5 later in Japan than in Europe and the United States), it was the anarchists
 6 who held more closely to an ideal of restructured consciousness as part
 7 and parcel of a revolutionary state (in strict Marxist terms, they were
 8 thus guilty of clinging to “utopian” as opposed to “scientific” socialism).³⁶

9 At the same time, as noted above, Uchiyama’s vision for a better
 10 world is also heavily informed by the monastic tradition—specifically,
 11 the simple and communal life of the (idealized) *sangha*. Here again, we
 12 could argue that the monastic ideal is shared by virtually all forms of
 13 Buddhism, though it appears that Uchiyama’s inspiration was the Chinese
 14 Chan tradition(s) that gave birth to Japanese Zen.³⁷ Around the time he
 15 became an abbot, in 1904, Uchiyama avers:

16
 17 I reflected on the way in which priests of my sect had undergone
 18 religious training in China in former times [and] I realized
 19 how beautiful it had been. Here were two or three hundred
 20 persons who, living in one place at one time, shared a com-
 21 munal lifestyle in which they wore the same clothing and ate
 22 the same food. I held to the ideal that if this could be applied
 23 to one village, one county, or one country, what an extremely
 24 good system would be created.³⁸

25
 26 As Inagaki notes, Uchiyama’s insight into the fundamental similarity
 27 between the idealized Buddhist *sangha*—rooted in dedication to simple,
 28 communal living and, most significantly, a rejection of private property—
 29 and the basic assumptions of socialism, was one that would not appear
 30 again within Japanese Buddhist thought for nearly three decades, in the
 31 work of Seno’o Girō and the Youth League for Revitalizing Buddhism.³⁹

32 Uchiyama’s *Ordinary Self-awakening* is different in both style and con-
 33 tent from *Anarcho-communist Revolution*. Here the manifesto-like rhetoric
 34 is toned down considerably, and Uchiyama makes a more deliberate case
 35 for freedom and democracy using the leitmotif of *jikaku* (自覚). While
 36 this term can be reasonably translated into English as “self-awareness”
 37 or “self-consciousness,” it also has deep Buddhist roots and associations
 38 as a synonym for a variety of terms connected to awakening, such as

39
 40

nirvāṇa, *bodhi*, *kenshō* (検証), and *satori* (悟り)—thus I have chosen to 1
 render it as “self-awakening.” As with his use of the compound *anraku jiyū* 2
 in *Anarcho-communist Revolution*, the term *jikaku* in this piece implies 3
 both a Buddhist awakening (i.e., an existential awareness that entails a 4
 fundamental person transformation and encompasses or leads to liber- 5
 ation from suffering) and the more overtly Western philosophical sense 6
 of gaining “autonomy” (and political “freedom”) through liberation from 7
 the constraints of tradition, authority, and personal ignorance. Reading 8
 this essay, with its emphasis on “freedom,” the libertarian aspect of Uchi- 9
 yama’s vision becomes apparent, and we can see why he identified with 10
 anarchism as much as communism as a political ideal.⁴⁰ While communal 11
 living and the abandonment of private property remain a future ideal, 12
 Uchiyama’s immediate concern was the destruction of the semifeudal 13
 system that denied farmers the use of what is theirs by “natural right” 14
 (J. *tōzen no kenri*, 當然の権利). On one level, *Ordinary Self-awakening* 15
 reads as much like a work by classical liberal writers such as John Locke 16
 (1632–1704) or Thomas Paine (1737–1809)—or Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤 17
 諭吉, 1835–1901)—as it does one by Marx or Bakunin. And yet, as with 18
 Inoue Shuten, Uchiyama’s invocation of the term *heibon* (平凡; ordinary, 19
 commonplace or even vulgar) is resonant of both the secular left discourse 20
 of “the people” (J. *heimin* 平民) as well as the Chan/Zen emphasis on the 21
 mundane or everyday as the vehicle or mode of awakening. 22

Finally, let us return to Uchiyama’s declaration of his commitment to 23
 socialism, published in the January 17, 1904 edition of the *People’s Paper*. 24
 However brief, this remains his clearest expression of the link between 25
 classical Buddhist teachings and early twentieth-century left-wing politics. 26
 Here is the declaration in its entirety: 27

As a propagator of Buddhism I teach that “all sentient beings 29
 possess Buddha nature” [J. *issai shujō shitsū busshō*, 一切衆生 30
 悉有仏性] and that “within this Dharma there is equality, with 31
 neither superior nor inferior” [J. *kore hō byōdō mu kōge*, 此 32
 法平等無高下]. Furthermore, I teach that “all sentient beings 33
 are my children” [J. *issai shujō mina kore ako*, 一切衆生の(皆) 34
 是吾子]. Having taken these golden words as the basis of my 35
 faith, I discovered that they are in complete agreement with 36
 the principles of socialism. It was thus that I became a believer 37
 in socialism.⁴¹ 38

39
 40

1 In short, here we see Uchiyama seeking Buddhist foundations for equal-
 2 ity in the early (and admittedly controversial) Mahāyāna teaching of
 3 Buddha Nature, which, via Tiantai/Tendai, would eventually provide a
 4 shared foundation for virtually all East Asian Buddhist sects, including
 5 Zen, Pure Land (both Jōdo and Shin), and Nichiren. While it remains an
 6 open question as to whether the doctrine of Buddha Nature can provide
 7 a sure foundation for a modern Buddhist conception of social and polit-
 8 ical equality, this is certainly a feature of East Asian Mahāyāna teachings
 9 that has been upheld by socially engaged Buddhists in recent decades.⁴²
 10 Working against the egalitarian interpretation favored by Uchiyama and
 11 socially engaged Buddhists, however, is the question of to which “realm”
 12 these statements apply. For instance, the well-known teaching of *sabetsu*
 13 *byōdō* (差別平等)—usually translated as “differentiation is equality”—was
 14 taken by prominent Meiji Buddhist figures like Shimaji Mokurai (島地黙
 15 雷, 1838–1911) to imply that distinctions in social status and wealth are
 16 simply natural givens like age, sex, and so on, and have nothing whatsoever
 17 to do with the fundamental equality of the “absolute” realm.

18 Rather than try to resolve the “problem” of inequality in the here
 19 and now, Buddhists—according to Shimaji and others of his ilk—must
 20 focus on reaching the realm of undifferentiated being, by which all such
 21 superficial distinctions are recognized as illusory. Thus socialists, whether
 22 of the revolutionary or reformist hue, are mistaken in taking the material
 23 (i.e., contingent) world to be the fundamental reality, missing the forest
 24 for the trees, as it were.⁴³ Of course, Uchiyama, like most other Bud-
 25 dhist progressives and radicals, turned this around to ask Shimaji and
 26 his compatriots why they are fixated on establishing a (“conventional”)
 27 duality between this world and some other—what Ketelaar has termed
 28 “the bifurcation of form [J. *yūkei*] and formless [J. *mukei*]”—when in
 29 fact no “ultimate” distinction can be made.⁴⁴ The world in which we live,
 30 and suffer, is nothing less than the “transcendent” realm in its imperfect,
 31 “unawakened” state. The fundamental or “transcendent” equality asserted in
 32 the Mahāyāna sutras is, for Uchiyama, a call to action, to bring about the
 33 transformation of this world of inequality and suffering into a perfected
 34 “Buddha land” in which there is “comfort and freedom” (J. *anraku jiyū*).
 35 After all, the key here for Uchiyama is the logical chain that: (a) suffering
 36 exists in this world; (b) social inequality is a primary cause for suffering
 37 and thus must be eliminated; and (c) to eliminate social inequality, the
 38 system that creates such inequality must be replaced—even at the risk
 39 of one’s life.

40

Meiji Zen Currents: Universalism and the State 1

2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
Given their unabashed eclecticism—freely mixing social democracy, liber-
tarianism, anarchism, socialism, communism, various forms of Buddhism
(both Mahāyāna and Theravāda) and even progressive interpretations of
Christianity and Confucianism—it would seem neither the Zen-trained
layman Inoue nor the Zen priest Uchiyama was particularly beholden
to Chan/Zen ideas or practices. And yet, in their commitment to basic
principles of universalism as well as the possibility of a direct, potentially
radical transformation of being, which may begin with the individual
consciousness but must irrevocably transcend the self-other divide, one
detects hints of a contemporaneous stream of Zen thought, traceable to
the archetypal Zen modernist lineage of Imakita Kōsen, Shaku Sōen, and
D. T. Suzuki. At the same time, as we see above, there are important dis-
tinctions that create a clear political separation between these two “wings”
of Zen modernism. The following section examines these distinctions
by tracing the roots of “mainstream” Zen modernism in Japan (and by
extension, the postwar West).

19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
Imakita Kōsen was a Rinzai Zen priest who, on the heels of the
1868 Meiji Restoration, became the first leader of the influential lay Zen
society Association for the Abandonment of Concepts of Objectivity and
Subjectivity (J. Ryōmō Kyōkai, 両忘協会).⁴⁵ Inspired by his early studies
with Confucian scholar Fujisawa Togai (藤沢東垓, 1794–1864), Imakita
became convinced that Buddhism must expand beyond the monasteries
and beyond funeral services to engage the everyday lives of ordinary men
and women. At the same time, against the beliefs of many prominent mid-
Meiji intellectuals, in the 1880s Imakita insisted that the modern Japanese
state *required* religion—specifically, Buddhism—in order to develop in a
progressive fashion, since only religion could provide both clear ethical
guidelines and engender “faith,” a dual task that neither Confucian nor
Western learning could match, at least not on the level of the ordinary
person.⁴⁶ As such, as with many of his Buddhist Enlightenment peers but
in contrast to the later New Buddhists—and particularly progressives such
as Inoue and Uchiyama—he called for active government support for the
dharma, if not the sangha.⁴⁷

36
37
38
39
40
The Ryōmō Kyōkai was however more than simply a place for lay
Buddhists to engage in the practice of meditation. It also served as an
intellectual society for a discussion of Zen and Buddhist thought, as well
as a place where participants could engage in cultural activities such as

1 poetry, music, calligraphy, and the game of *go*. And yet, the first of the
 2 four simple “rules” of the society states that “members could discuss
 3 anything they wanted *except* politics and ‘worldly affairs.’”⁴⁸ That is to
 4 say, the point of the society was *personal* moral cultivation (J. *jitsugaku*,
 5 實学), which must extend outward to others in active compassion but
 6 should not intrude upon political concerns. This is a good example of
 7 the way that morality, ethics, and culture were frequently disconnected
 8 from politics (and economics) in the discourse, if not practice, of Meiji
 9 Buddhist modernism.⁴⁹

10 While very much a product of the conflicting streams of modernity
 11 that coursed through Japan in the late Edo and early Meiji periods, as
 12 we have seen in both examples cited above, lay Buddhist movements of
 13 the period also had roots in (often eclectic) interpretations of Confucian
 14 and Neo-Confucian dictates on the importance of moral cultivation and
 15 “practical wisdom.” In addition, while priestly advocates like Imakita
 16 Kōsen clearly wished to preserve the traditional monastic lifestyle, others
 17 such as Nagamatsu Nissen (長松日扇, 1817–1890), were less sanguine
 18 when it came to institutional Buddhism. A few leading lay—or *koji* (居
 19 士)—Buddhists modeled themselves along the lines of the image of the
 20 traditional Mahāyāna bodhisattva (e.g., Vimalakīrti), whose overwhelming
 21 compassion required a commitment to secular life that kept them volun-
 22 tarily attached to this world. For reformers like Takada Dōken (高田道
 23 見, 1858–1923), author of the influential *Koji shinron* (居士新論, 1891),
 24 this lay orientation, coupled with a nonsectarian “unified (or universal)
 25 Buddhism” (J. *tsū bukkyō*, 通仏教), was the wave of the future for Japa-
 26 nese Buddhism.⁵⁰ Though Takada himself does not seem to go quite so
 27 far, it is possible to read this scenario as one in which the priests—like
 28 the fully awakened buddhas—could be left to their contemplations and
 29 otherworldly realms because the *bosatsu-koji* were the ones engaged in
 30 the active work of compassion. This contrast fits well with the lingering
 31 Meiji discourse on Buddhist “degeneration”—and indeed, the anticlerical
 32 flavor one finds in some remarks by *koji* of the period would find a home
 33 in the New Buddhist movements of late Meiji and beyond.

34 Shaku Sōen (1859–1919), Rinzai Zen master, chief abbot of Engakuji
 35 in Kamakura was, among other things, de facto leader of the Japanese
 36 delegation at the 1893 Chicago World Parliament of Religions. In addition,
 37 as Imakita’s dharma heir, Sōen carried on his teacher’s work by instructing
 38 lay Buddhists in Kamakura and Tokyo in the practice of meditation.⁵¹ Here
 39 I focus my remarks on some distinctive elements of Sōen’s modernistic
 40

and internationalist vision for Buddhism, which extend the lay initiatives
of Imakita and others and lay the foundations for Suzuki's distinctive
brand of "existential" Zen that has had a defining influence on Western
Buddhism since World War II.

Sōen advocated Buddhist unity (e.g., in his collaborative multivolume project, *Essentials of the Buddhist Sects*) as well as hegemony—he proclaimed Japanese Mahāyāna the "universal" religion of the modern world.⁵² A theme that recurs in many of Sōen's lectures and writings is that of evolution, which is in turn intricately connected with a conception of "progress." As with most of his Parliament or religious colleagues, Sōen viewed Buddhism—more specifically, Mahāyāna Buddhism as it existed in modern Japan—as the pinnacle of Buddhist (if not more generally religious or "spiritual") evolution. While he admits that even contemporary Japanese Buddhism is not free from "superstition, error [and] prejudice," he quickly notes that this is an inevitable by-product of a dynamic, "ever-living faith[,] which knows no ossification or fossilization."⁵⁵ Moreover, despite the fact that some believers understand their faith in terms of a "fixed and unchanging" essence, this is a mistake. Religion does (and must) "evolve" with the times and conditions.

For Sōen, as for most New Buddhists who followed him, a key feature of Buddhism—as opposed to most (if not all) other forms of religion—is its "tendency . . . toward intellectuality."⁵³ This does not imply, he quickly adds, that Buddhism is solely defined by logic or rationality but simply that it "is always ready to stand before the tribunal of science." The danger that haunts most religious systems, he insists, is not intellectual error so much as "sentimentalism," which in turn leads to "mysticism." In short, while Buddhism embraces compassion as a guiding principle, Buddhist love is always tempered by "spiritual insight and intellectual discrimination." Furthermore, in picking up the Meiji discourse of practical wisdom, Sōen argues that Buddhism is, first and foremost, inclined toward aims that are "pre-eminently practical and spiritual." By this he means that all metaphysical speculation, while valuable, must be considered as preparatory for "ethics."

In considering Buddhist metaphysics, Sōen is quick to point out (against the perceptions of many Westerners) that Buddhists are fundamentally empiricists and realists, that is, they accept and affirm the reality of the world itself: "This life as we live it, is true, and not a dream." He also affirms (on, it must be said, more selective doctrinal grounds) the a priori existence of one "ultimate source which is all-powerful, all-knowing,

1 and all loving,” of which the entire world is a “manifestation.” Citing the
 2 authority of American writer and Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson
 3 (1803–1882), Sōen goes on to paint a pantheistic, Spinozistic, or possibly
 4 Neoplatonic vision of the universe, in which all existence (both sentient
 5 and nonsentient) emerges from the creative force of “Original Reason.”
 6 And yet, while this creative and moral force is inherent, Sōen rejects a
 7 strict pantheism, since “God is greater than the totality of things.”

8 Once again, all this speculation must be connected to the practice
 9 of ethics, which he proceeds to summarize in the following remarkably
 10 succinct passage:

11

12 Stop doing anything wrong, which is against the reason of
 13 things; do whatever is good, which advances the course of
 14 reason in this and finally help those who are still behind and
 15 weary of life to realize enlightenment: and here is Buddhism
 16 in a nutshell. It has nothing to do with prayer and worship
 17 and singing and so on. Our simple everyday life of love and
 18 sympathy is all that is needed to be a good Buddhist.⁵⁴

19

20 While we must keep in mind that this essay was written for the purpose
 21 of proselytizing Buddhism to a Western audience—and filtered through
 22 the Westernized lens of Sōen’s interpreter Suzuki—it displays a fascinating
 23 combination of elements of Buddhist and Zen modernism, especially the
 24 clear Unitarian inflections, some of which come via Emerson. Here, Sōen
 25 is quite explicit that the “religious life” is meaningless outside of everyday,
 26 ethically oriented activity. Indeed, as Spinoza and the New Buddhists, there
 27 does not seem to be a “secular” realm to speak of—only a life that is or is
 28 not lived according to Buddhist ideals. Having said that, notice that Sōen,
 29 like Imakita before him and Suzuki after him, does not extend his argument
 30 about Buddhist engagement into the realm of politics or social activism.
 31 In this sense, however modern he may be in many respects, and however
 32 undeniably cosmopolitan in others, he remains a true “conservative” in
 33 the Burkean sense of being convinced that “evil” or “ignorance” is rooted
 34 in individuals and their behaviors, not in social structures. Thus, as with
 35 most of the reformist figures discussed thus far, even while “awakening” is
 36 firmly set within the context of this world and human relationships, and
 37 the point of Buddhism (and any religion) reaffirmed as “the promotion
 38 of general welfare and . . . the realization of Reason,” the focus remains
 39 on spiritual and moral cultivation, rather than a critique of economic or
 40 political structures or social activism.⁵⁵

This also comes through clearly in Sōen's remarks on materialism. 1
 Though in the same essay cited above he notes that Buddhism "never 2
 forgets the fact that our religious consciousness ever demands something 3
 concrete, that which is visible to our senses, that which is observable in 4
 our everyday life," the Rinzai Zen priest certainly does not accept the 5
 doctrine of materialism, in any of its various forms. Part of this no doubt 6
 emerges from his Hegelian sympathies, as seen above and elsewhere, 7
 where he asserts the following, rather disarming doctrine of individual 8
 destiny: "This corporeal existence, this particular temporary combination 9
 of feelings and thoughts and desires, may dissolve, may not last forever 10
 as it is, for it is no more than an agent in the hands of the world-soul to 11
 execute its own end. When it decrees that its agent must put on a new 12
 garment, this will take place as it is willed."⁵⁶ 13

We will not dwell here on the contentious issue of Shaku Sōen's 14
 nationalism, though the short essay under analysis here clearly provides 15
 Buddhist support for self-sacrifice in times of national conflict. More 16
 significant for my purposes is, once again, the rejection of a materialist 17
 perspective in favor of something more clearly Hegelian and idealist, 18
 framed here in terms of both religious evolution and individual awakening. 19
 As Ketelaar has argued, Sōen, along with other members of the Japanese 20
 Buddhist delegation, aimed to present "Eastern Buddhism" as a spiritual 21
 antidote for the crisis of (Western) modernity, and thus as an alternative 22
 to Christianity. Only a spirituality that is at once "non-contingent yet 23
 immanent" can rein in a purely secular materialism, which is here assumed 24
 to be inherently immoral and hedonistic.⁵⁷ This antimaterialist strain 25
 would provide a key foundation to the Buddhist response to and critique 26
 of socialism in the final decade of Meiji, when most Buddhists—including 27
 the leading figures of Buddhist modernism discussed here—would join 28
 forces with their erstwhile foes, Japanese Christians, to do battle against 29
 the "common enemy" of irreligious materialism.⁶² 30
 31
 32

Conclusions: Is There Any Zen There? 33

Returning to our case studies of Inoue Shūten and Uchiyama Gudō, once 35
 we set their work into the context of contemporary movements in Japanese 36
 Buddhism—particularly the lay and philosophical developments occurring 37
 beyond the monasteries—the "Zen" connections become somewhat more 38
 apparent. Both men remained Buddhists throughout their lives. Uchiyama 39
 (at least by his own understanding, if not that of his Sōtō sect), died in 40

1 the robes of a Zen priest. While Inoue's pacifism was certainly inspired
 2 by *ahimsa* and socialist ideals, his universalist inclinations and residual
 3 naturalism (if not materialism) have Zen roots. As for Uchiyama, while
 4 his ideas appear to be more explicitly grounded in Mahāyāna themes—
 5 including, as noted above, the *Lotus Sutra*—he looks to the (idealized)
 6 Chan/Zen monastery as a model of simplicity, equality, democracy, and
 7 virtue. Both men worked within a Buddhist modernist discourse shaped
 8 by scholars and scholar-priests such as Inoue Enyrō, Murakami Senshō,
 9 Kiyozawa Manshi, and the New Buddhist Fellowship, as well as the more
 10 specific Zen modernist line extending from Imakita Kōsen through Shaku
 11 Sōen and D. T. Suzuki. And yet, due to the distinctive form of maximalism
 12 at work, the Zen modernism(s) of Inoue and Uchiyama set a distinctive,
 13 progressive course.

14 Where the two men differed most, of course, was on the question
 15 of violence. A brief anecdote serves to make this point. As previously
 16 mentioned, at some point Inoue contacted fellow socialist Uchiyama.
 17 While most scholars today absolve Uchiyama of any complicity in a plot
 18 to assassinate the Meiji emperor, he was certainly no pacifist, as a perusal
 19 of his scathing *Anarcho-communist Revolution* makes plain. Uchiyama
 20 affirmed his belief in the use of explosives for fomenting revolution in
 21 speeches made while touring the Kansai region in 1910, not long before
 22 his arrest and incarceration.⁵⁸ While staying with friends in Kobe, he made
 23 plans to visit Inoue, presumably to solidify their connection. When he
 24 arrived at Inoue's door, however, the latter pretended to be out (after which
 25 Uchiyama decided to take a stroll around Minatogawa Shrine, dedicated,
 26 ironically, to a military commander).⁵⁹ While it is impossible to know
 27 Inoue's motivations, a reasonable conclusion is that he, like other New
 28 Buddhists, was uncomfortable associating with the more radical fringe
 29 of the socialist movement and, more specifically in the case of Inoue and
 30 Uchiyama, with someone who clearly did not share his views about the
 31 renunciation of violence, even as a means toward establishing "social justice."
 32
 33

Notes

34
 35
 36 1. Sections of this essay have been previously published in modified form
 37 in chapters 1, 3, and 4 of my monograph, *Against Harmony: Progressive and*
 38 *Radical Buddhism in Modern Japan* (Oxford, 2017).

39 2. Donald S. Lopez Jr., "Foreword," in *The Gospel of Buddhism: According*
 40 *to Old Records by Paul Carus* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 2004), 8.

3. Juliane Schober, *Modern Buddhist Conjunctures in Myanmar: Cultural Narratives, Colonial Legacies, and Civil Society* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 148.
4. Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 59; see also Schober, *Modern Buddhist Conjunctures*, 72.
5. See Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, *Shin bukkyō to wa nani mono ka? "jiyū tōkyū" to "kenzen naru shinkō," 『新仏教』とはなにものか? —「自由討究」と「健全なる信仰」* (What is *New Buddhism*? From "free investigation" to "sound faith"). In *Kindai Nihon ni okeru chishikijin shūkyō undō no gensetsu kūkan: "Shin Bukkyō" no shisōshi, bunkashiteki kenkyū*, 近代日本における知識人宗教運動の言説空間 — 『新仏教』の思想史・文化史的研究 [The discursive space of intellectual religious movements in modern Japan: A study of the intellectual and cultural history of "New Buddhism"]. Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, no. 20320016, 2011, 35.
6. Takashima Beihō, *Takashima Beihō tsuiooku* 高嶋米峰—追憶 [Recollections of Takashima Beihō], (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1993), 11.
7. For more on Inoue Shūten, see Akamatsu Tesshin (赤松連城), "Inoue Shūten no shisō: Sono shōgai to heiwaron oyobi zen shisō" 井上秀天の思想—その生涯と平和論及び禅思想 [The thought of Inoue Shūten: His life, peace theory, and Zen thought], *Ryūkoku daigaku ronshū* 434–35 (1989): 517–53; Fukushima Hiroataka (福嶋寛隆), "Mō hitotsu no hisenron: Nihon teikokushugi kakuritsuki ni bukkyōsha toshite" もう一つの非戦論—日本帝国主義確立期に仏教者として [Another antiwar theory: From a Buddhist during the establishment of Japanese imperialism], *Dendōin kiyō* 18 (1976): 54–71; Moriya Tomoe (守屋友江), "Inoue Shūten" (井上秀天), in *Kindai Nihon ni okeru chishikijin shūkyō undō*, 近代日本における知識人宗教運動の言説空間 — 『新仏教』の思想史・文化史的研究, 283–86; Moriya, "Social Ethics of 'New Buddhists' at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Suzuki Daisetsu and Inoue Shūten," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 32, no. 2 (2005): 283–304; Sahashi Hōryū (佐橋法龍), *Inoue Shūten* (井上秀天). Tokyo: Meicho Fukyūkai, 1982.
8. See Moriya, "Social Ethics of 'New Buddhists,'" 293.
9. Moriya, "Social Ethics of 'New Buddhists,'" 296.
10. For Inoue's critique of Suzuki, see Inoue Shūten (井上秀天), *Bukkyō no gendaiteki hihan* 仏教の現代的批判 [Contemporary criticism of Buddhism], (Tokyo: Hōbunkan, 1925); Suzuki, D[aisetsu] T[eitarō], "Gendai shin'yaku hekiganroku shōkai" o yomu, 「現代新訳碧巖録詳解」を読む [On reading "A New, Modern Translation and Interpretation of the *Blue Cliff Record*"], *Zendō* 97 (1918): 13–21.
11. Moriya, "Social Ethics of 'New Buddhists,'" 293.
12. SB 12, 12 (December 1911), 1380–87; Akamatsu Tesshin (赤松徹真) and Fukushima Hiroataka (福嶋寛隆), eds., *Shin bukkyō*, 新仏教 (New Buddhism). 4 vols. (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1982). Cited as SB, by volume and date of original publication.
13. SB 12, 12 (December 1911), 1384.

- 1 14. SB 12, 12 (December 1911), 1386.
 2 15. SB 12, 12 (December 1911), 1386.
 3 16. Moriya, “Social Ethics of ‘New Buddhists,’” 294.
 4 17. Moriya, “Social Ethics of ‘New Buddhists,’” 296. For more on Suzuki’s
 5 views of society and the state, see Kirita Kiyohide, “D.T. Suzuki on Society and
 6 the State.” In *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*,
 7 edited by James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of
 8 Hawai‘i Press, 1994), 52–74.
 9 18. See Yoshida Kyūichi, *Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 日本近代仏教史研究 [A study of modern Japanese Buddhist history], (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan,
 10 1992), 340–41.
 11 19. See Brian Victoria, *Zen at War* (New York: Weatherhill, 1997), chap. 3:
 12 “Uchiyama Gudō: Radical Soto Zen Priest,” 38–48; Ishikawa Rikizan, “The Social
 13 Response of Buddhists to the Modernization of Japan: The Contrasting Lives of
 14 Two Sōtō Zen Monks,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25 (1998), 87–115,
 15 for a treatment of Uchiyama and the nationalist Sōtō Zen priest Takeda Hanshi
 16 竹田範之 (1864–1911).
 17 20. See, for example, Yoshida, *Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 402–408. For
 18 more on Uchiyama, see Inagaki Masami, *Kindai bukkyō no henkakusha*, 近代仏教
 19 の変革者 [Modern Buddhist radicals], (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1975); Kashiwagi
 20 Ryūhō (柏木隆法), *Taigyaku jiken to Uchiyama Gudō* 大逆事件と内山愚童 [Uchiyama
 21 Gudō and the High Treason Incident], (Tokyo: JCA shuppan, 1979); Morinaga
 22 Eizaburō (森長英三郎). *Uchiyama Gudō* (内山愚童) (Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 1984).
 23 21. See Ann Walthall, “The Sakura Sōgorō Story,” in *Peasant Uprisings in*
 24 *Japan: A Critical Anthology of Peasant Histories*, ed. and trans. Anne Walthall
 25 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 35–76.
 26 22. According to the collective research and statistical work of Aoki Kōji,
 27 Yokoyama Toshio, and Yamanaka Kiyotaka, Echigo was one of only six provinces
 28 (out of seventy-one) to experience more than 100 *ikki* (armed peasant revolts)
 29 between 1590 and 1867; see Herbert P. Bix, *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590–1884*
 30 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), xxiv–xxv.
 31 23. Ishikawa notes in particular the “germination of the idea of the ‘self’ of
 32 ‘self-awakening’” in Uchiyama’s *Ordinary Self-awakening*, which may have come
 33 from Inoue; “Social Response of Buddhists,” 99.
 34 24. See Griffith T. Foulk, “Myth, Ritual and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch’an
 35 Buddhism,” in *Religion and Society in Tang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley
 36 Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1993), esp.
 37 147–49, for an analysis of the rhetoric of Chan monastic practice as developed
 38 in Song China.
 39 25. Stefano Bellieni, “Notes on the History of the Left-Wing Movement in
 40 Meiji Japan.” *Supplemento n. 21 agli Annali* 39, fasc. 4 (1979): 23.
 26. See Ishikawa, “Social Response of Buddhists,” 102–103.

27. Whereas Victoria is somewhat dismissive of the intellectual work of Uchiyama and similar activist monks, Yoshida Kyūichi goes to the other extreme, proclaiming that “Uchiyama Gudō was not a thinker like Kōtoku [Shūsui]. His socialist and anarchist ideas emerged from his experience” (*Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 402). In his work (originally published in 1959), Yoshida called for more research on the theoretical connections between Buddhism and political theories such as socialism and anarchism (401); see Ishikawa, “Social Response of Buddhists,” 104.

28. Ishikawa, “Social Response of Buddhists,” 102.

29. Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2002), 114.

30. Bix notes the increase in the power of landlord families over tenants throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, citing it as the primary reason for the growth of peasant riots during the same period; *Peasant Protest*, xx.

31. In a recently published article, Asai Endo has argued that the *Lotus Sutra* should be considered the very foundation of Japanese Buddhism; see Asai Endō. “The Lotus Sutra as the Core of Japanese Buddhism: Shifts in Representations of its Fundamental Principle,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 41, no. 1 (2014): 45–64.

32. On this issue, Yoshida argues that both Uchiyama and Itō Shoshin shared a fundamental belief in the difference between “the way of original Buddhism” (*J. bukkyō honrai no michi*, 仏教本来の道) and the forms of sectarian Buddhism existent in Meiji Japan; *Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 406.

33. Uchiyama seems to have arrived at his preference for anarchism prior to Kōtoku Shūsui’s famous lecture at Kinkikan Hall in Kanda, Tokyo, on June 28, 1906, entitled “Sekai kakumei undō no chōryū,” 世界革命運動の潮流 [The tide of the world revolutionary movement], in which the founder of the Heiminsha announced his break with social democratic (i.e., parliamentary) tactics in favor of revolutionary syndicalism, effecting an irrevocable split in Japan’s young socialist movement; see Frederick G. Notehelfer, *Kōtoku Shūsui, Portrait of a Japanese Radical* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 133–37.

34. John Crump, *Hatta Shūzō, and Pure Anarchism in Interwar Japan* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 1.

35. In an essay on “Nakae Chōmin and Buddhism,” Eddy Dufourmont discusses the possibility of a connection between materialist and atheistic thinking and Zen by focusing on the impact of Buddhism on mid-Meiji thinker Nakae Chōmin (中江兆民, 1847–1901). Certainly, despite the fact that Inoue Enryō was his blood relation, Uchiyama seems to have far more in common with the politically liberal Chōmin, Enryō’s rival and Kōtoku Shūsui’s teacher; see Dufourmont, “Nakae Chomin and Buddhism: Reconsidering the Controversy between Nakae Chomin and Inoue Enryō,” *International Inoue Enryō Research* 1 (2013): 63–75.

- 1 36. See Stephen Filler, “Chaos from Order: Anarchy and Anarchism in Mod-
2 ern Japanese Fiction, 1900–1930” (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2004), 73–74.
- 3 37. It bears reiterating that Uchiyama’s vision of a simple Chan monastic
4 community is filtered through centuries of “myth-making” by Chan/Zen Bud-
5 dhists, and bears little connection to historical reality; see Foulk, “Myth, Ritual.”
- 6 38. Inagaki, *Kindai bukkyō no henkakusha*, 112–13; trans. Victoria, *Zen at*
7 *War*, 40–41, with modifications by the author.
- 8 39. Inagaki, *Kindai bukkyō no henkakusha*, 113.
- 9 40. Although it is often said that Uchiyama, following the lead of Kōtoku
10 Shūsui and Sakai Toshihiko, abandoned socialism for anarchism, in fact he never
11 makes a clear theoretical distinction between anarchism, socialism, or commu-
12 nism—just as he never makes a clear distinction between Buddhism and these
13 economic and political theories; see Yoshida, *Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū*, 405.
- 14 41. Originally published in *People’s Paper* 10 (January 17, 1904); reprinted
15 in Kashiwagi, *Taigyaku jiken to Uchiyama Gudō*, 29; trans. Brian Victoria, with
16 my modifications.
- 17 42. Ishikawa notes the similarities between Uchiyama and Dr. B. R.
18 Ambedkar (1891–1956) on the issue of employing Buddhist teachings to battle
19 discrimination and promote social equality, as well as the struggle to connect
20 Marxism and Buddhism. Of course, as Ishikawa rightly notes, Ambedkar was
21 working on the basis of Theravāda (as Ishikawa has it, “original” or *gensho* 原初)
22 Buddhism, and thus could not appeal to the specific doctrine of Buddha Nature.
23 Also, whereas Ambedkar clearly favored Buddhism over Marxism, Uchiyama,
24 like Senōō Girō after him, saw them as perfectly compatible—perhaps even, if
25 understood and practiced correctly, perfectly identical; Ishikawa, “Social Response
26 of Buddhists,” 100.
- 27 43. Shimaji Mokurai, *Shimaji Mokurai zenshū*, 島地黙雷全集 [Complete
28 works of Shimaji Mokurai], vol. 3 (Kyoto: Honganji shuppan, 1973), 285–96.
- 29 44. James Edward Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Bud-
30 dhism and Its Persecution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 134.
- 31 45. Ryōmō (also read ryōbō; lit. “neglecting both”) is a traditional Buddhist
32 term implying “detachment from dichotomies.” In this context it can be taken to
33 mean “abandonment of objectivity and subjectivity.”
- 34 46. Suzuki, Imakita Kōsen, 184–85.
- 35 47. At the same time, it should be noted that Imakita—as with most Bud-
36 dhist leaders of the day—opposed the 1872 Council of State decree that Buddhist
37 monks could now get married and eat meat (J. *nikujiki saitai*, 肉食妻帯).
- 38 48. Sawada, *Practical Pursuits*, 159, my emphasis.
- 39 49. Sawada argues that the idealization of the lay practitioner in Imakita’s
40 group represents a larger coalescence of two distinctive East Asian models of human
fulfillment: “the Confucian gentleman official and the Buddhist lay bodhisattva”;
see Sawada, *Practical Pursuits*, 6.

50. Ikeda Eishun (池田英俊), *Meiji no shin bukkuyō undō*. 明治の新仏教運動 [The Meiji New Buddhist movement] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunsha, 1976), 123; also see Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs*, 185. Sawada notes that despite his enthusiasm for lay Buddhism, Takada was wary of appropriation or misuse of the term *koji* by “dilettantes” (*Practical Pursuits*, 181–82).
51. The original organization, which had flourished in the 1870s and 1880s, had long since lapsed. Sōen encouraged his student Shaku Sōkatsu (釈宗括, 1870–1954) to restart the Ryōmō Kyōkai around 1900. In 1906, Sokatsu and Sasaki Shigetsu (佐々木指月; also known as Sōkei-an 曹溪庵, 1882–1945) brought the newly reformed group to San Francisco. In Japan, Ryōmō Kyōkai would have a postwar reincarnation with Ningen Zen Kyōdan (人間禪教団), founded by Koun-an Tatsuta Eizan (耕雲庵立田英山, 1893–1971). See Sawada, *Practical Pursuits*, 161.
52. It is for the latter, as well as for various remarks on the positive connection between Zen and warfare, that Sōen is targeted by Brian Victoria for his complicity in the early development of “Imperial Way Zen” in Japan.
53. All quotes in the following section are from Shaku, “What is Buddhism?” 37–40.
54. Shaku, “What is Buddhism?” 40.
55. Shaku, “What is Buddhism?” 41.
56. Shaku, “Buddhism and Oriental Culture,” 44.
57. Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs*, 165–66.
58. Yoshida, *Nihon kindai bukkuyōshi kenkyū*, 421–24.
59. Yoshida, *Nihon kindai bukkuyōshi kenkyū*, 423.