

**THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION**  
**'JEWELLED SWORD'**  
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*The 'essential' way of life is to dedicate ourselves to the widespread propagation of the human-istic teachings of Buddhism, explains Shin'ichi Yamamoto. 'In contrast, no matter what kind of social status or position you may acquire later on, that is all just the theoretical.'*

Shin'ichi Yamamoto's series of lectures to Kyoto University students on Nichiren Daishonin's "One Hundred and Six Comparisons" finished in August of the following year, 1964. They met a total of seven times, including the opening session. After that, Shin'ichi began a new lecture series on the "Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings" for leaders of the student division in regions of Japan west of Kansai as well as Kyoto University students.

Shin'ichi himself had fond memories of studying "One Hundred and Six Comparisons." This was because his mentor, Josei Toda, had assigned it to him as study material when Shin'ichi was a Study Department professor (around 1955). Every evening after work, he would meet with Toda for a lesson on the treatise. Toda spent three days on the first comparison alone: "The theoretical three thousand realms in a single moment of life and the threefold contemplation in a single mind—theoretical and essential." He then divided the section into key phrases—"The Buddhas of the three existences"; "Appearing in the world and attaining the way"; "The meaning of the Life Span chapter of the Buddhism of harvest"; "The theoretical three thousand realms." He lectured on each one in great detail, from many different viewpoints.

The lectures were like a guide for Shin'ichi into the infinite, boundless realm of Buddhism; at the same time, they constituted a transmission—a direct passing on of the teachings—from mentor to disciple. When the lecture on the first comparison had ended, Toda said to Shin'ichi: "Memorize everything I have taught you so far and engrave it in your life. If you thoroughly study this first comparison and understand it deeply, you will understand the remaining 105.

"In addition, if you understand this treatise, you will understand the rest of the Daishonin's writings. It is very important to grasp each and every word correctly and completely. It is unacceptable for a professor or assistant professor in the study department to make mistakes on matters concerning study."

The lessons continued, covering two or three comparisons at a time. Whenever Shin'ichi's attention seemed to wane in the least, Toda would snap the Goshō shut and say: "That's all! I'm not a machine!" Each time that happened, Shin'ichi felt dejected and ashamed, but he continued to pursue his study, determined to etch every word into his heart. The pages of Shin'ichi's copy of the Goshō were black with the notes he took on Toda's lessons.

In his lectures to the Kyoto University students, Shin'ichi did his best to explain the Daishonin's teachings in the most accessible way possible, since many of the participants had not yet mastered the fundamentals of Buddhist study. "One Hundred and Six Comparisons" strictly distinguished the Daishonin's Buddhism from that of Shakyamuni, establishing which was theoretical and essential and which was superior or inferior. Shin'ichi therefore began by discussing the difference between the essential teaching and

the theoretical teaching from every angle, and explaining how that applies to daily life.

What is the foundation of our lives? This question became the focus of his lectures.

The Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai of China compared the essential teaching to the moon in the sky and the theoretical teaching to a reflection of the moon on the water, thus pointing out that the essential is superior and the theoretical inferior. *Essential* means the actual substance of the truth—reality—while *theoretical* indicates a shadow, or reflection, of the truth. Just as theory derives from reality, the theoretical teaching derives from the essential teaching.

In one of his lectures, Shin'ichi introduced these concepts in detail, yet in a way that was easy to grasp: “Theory is a kind of measure. It is a model for explaining reality, but not reality itself. For example, a person’s life is changing every moment. That ever-changing reality is the actual substance of life. Theory, on the other hand, is abstracted from this reality and universalized. It is very important to be able to differentiate clearly between reality and theory, and to remain firmly grounded in reality.

“The basis of all reality is life itself. And it is human beings who live in the midst of reality. There are countless examples in history of absolute trust being placed in theory and ideology, which then degenerate into dogmatism that results in oppression. I hope that you intelligent young people will put an end to this tragic legacy of history.”

The last of the “One Hundred and Six Comparisons” says, “One must distinguish essential and theoretical, superior and inferior, in all things, even the swelling waves and the blowing wind” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 869). In reference to this, Shin'ichi said: “This passage tells us that the essential and theoretical are to be found in our own lives, and that we must draw a distinct line between them.

“For example, when we are sleeping, we are in a ‘theoretical’ phase of our existence, but when we are awake, we are in the ‘essential’ phase. For students, whose job it is to study, indulging in fun and entertainment is the theoretical while studying hard is the essential. In addition, those who are studying with the sole aim of making money or gaining status are living only for themselves and are thus choosing a ‘theoretical’ way of life that is caught up in the pursuit of worldly things. In your case, as members of the student division, the essential is to be studying with a deep sense of purpose to develop yourselves so that you can contribute to kosen-rufu.

“Our real identity is that of Bodhisattvas of the Earth who have come forth to carry out the widespread propagation of the humanistic teachings of Buddhism. For us, the essential way of life is to dedicate ourselves to that endeavor. In contrast, no matter what kind of social status or position you may acquire later on, that is all just the theoretical. I hope you will never make a mistake about this.”

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the  
novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto.  
The events take place in 1963.