

Special Series:

Humane Education, A Bridge to Peace (3)

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Gu: In the autumn of 2009, I had the honor of visiting Soka University, of which you are founder, to receive an honorary doctorate. I consider this proof of kindness on your part and that of the university and of the friendly feelings Japanese scholars have for Chinese pedagogical researchers. Everywhere at Soka University I observed the brilliance of your concepts. I could not help being especially moved to see the splendidly flourishing cherry tree, rising handsomely next to a monument inscribed with the characters *Zhou ying* (the Zhou cherry), which was planted to commemorate your meetings with Premier Zhou Enlai. That view convinced me that the friendship between the Chinese and Japanese peoples would surely continue flourishing like the cherry tree. I was also both touched and surprised by your bestowing on me a warmly cordial poem in Chinese, which contains all three Chinese characters of my name.

In English, it might be expressed this way:

“In sixty years’ meritorious teaching of
Fresh ideas lofty as the Taishan mountains, you
Observe the broad picture,
Clearly proclaiming: no learning without interest,
No teaching without love.”

I am deeply grateful for your overly generous estimation.

Like the nascent morning sun, Soka University continues to rise and advance. Receiving a prestigious honorary doctorate from such an institution is a supreme glory. I consider it a crowning distinction on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Society of Education.

Ikeda: Welcoming a distinguished scholar like you to Soka University

and conferring an honorary doctorate on you are joys surpassing all our hopes. As well as a pedagogue of immense wisdom, you are a great leader of Chinese education today. Our university is tremendously honored that you have accepted our doctorate. Being privileged to give you an award will shed brilliant light on the future.

During the conferring ceremonies, you said emphatically, “Exchanges and cooperation in education not only affect the present, but also continue influencing and enlightening the future. Education is truly the seed of peace and the means for building a bridge of amity between China and Japan.”

You also said, “In this vastly changing society, only the act of learning can generate new values and lead to an invincible position. Now, more than a mere means to gaining a livelihood, learning expands the individual’s limits, promotes cultural enlightenment, elevates personal dignity, and makes happiness possible.”

This powerful statement from a person who perceives the significance of education from the most fundamental level has made a deep impression on teachers and students alike, renewing their determination to pursue the course of true learning, creativity, and invincibility.

Not long ago, I was honored to receive from you the Chinese original of the following poem:

“When the Great Way is practiced,
The public spirit rules all under the sun.
You act truly for goodness and the people.
Massive as a mountain is Virtue.
Wisdom, benevolence, and valor,
Noble ideals are to bring peace.”

Each word of the poem represents powerful, condensed encouragement. I am greatly honored by it and by the kind thoughts motivating you to send it to me. You yourself are a model example of a person who puts into practice this injunction from the Chinese Doctrine of the Mean: “You must study it broadly, investigate it in detail, deliberate on it carefully, discern it clearly and practice it universally.”¹ Engaging in dialogue with you is a treasured experience of traveling the great path of discovery and improvement.

1. THE TOYNBEE VIEW OF HISTORY

Ikeda: Speaking of dialogue brings back fond recollections of the time when, in May, 1972, at his invitation, I visited the British historian Arnold J. Toynbee in his home in London. A young man of 44, like a student, I shared with the learned man, who was 83 at the time, a series of discussions of the many problems confronting humanity and the world. The flowers and greenery of the balmy height of spring showed London at its most pleasant. I shall never forget the broadly smiling faces of Professor Toynbee and his wife, as they greeted me. At the conclusion of our series of discussions, which occupied 40 hours over a period of two years, Professor Toynbee told me that dialogue has an extremely great role to play in establishing harmony among the world's cultures, ethnic groups, and religions. As a kind of behest, he expressed his hope that I, as a young man, would widen the range of dialogue for the sake of uniting all humanity, including the Russians, the Americans, and the Chinese. With the intention of fulfilling my promise to do as he asked, I have stimulated a wave of dialogues throughout the world.

As you know, Professor Toynbee's view of history is characterized by a break with the Occident-centered habit of assigning primary importance in human progress to modern Western culture, which is imagined to be sufficiently and victoriously enlightened, progressive, and superior, to be an instructive model to all other cultures. Professor Toynbee felt that Western culture is in no position to condescend but is on an equal footing relevant to all the other cultures. He defined cultures as units capable of mutual comparative study and re-determined human history on the basis of their contacts with each other and of their prosperity and decline.

Cultural Diversity

Gu: His attitude demonstrates the breadth of mind of a great historian, one for whom I have the greatest respect. He was an outstanding person who evaluated Eastern and Western cultures fairly and with an objective eye. Actually, archaeological and anthropological research has revealed diverse origins for human civilizations. None is really central. It is just that some arose a little earlier and others a little later. With the flourishing of modern capitalism as a result of colonialist conquests and plundering, Western civilization developed rapidly. Western materialistic civilization assumed a leading place in the Orient. Consequently, Western scholars adopted a haughty viewpoint toward oriental cultures, when the

fact is that four great ancient cultures preceded Western culture by millennia. Realizing this, Professor Toynbee insisted on what he called the philosophical contemporaneity of all civilizations. Human civilization has a history of no more than a few millennia. In other words, it occupies a mere instant since the birth of the human race. This is why Professor Toynbee wrote: “[T]he histories of all societies of the species called civilization were in some sense parallel and contemporary.”²

He was highly critical of the idea of cultural integration in the study of history. There can be no such thing as a central culture. But ultimately, even Toynbee was unable to shake off the ghost of Western-centralism.

In his *A Study of History*, he wrote that almost all of the 21 civilizations of the world have stopped growing, rigidified, or fallen apart, leaving only Western civilization still alive. This way of thinking clearly bears the brand of Western-centralism.

While we do not recognize this view, neither are we willing to afford oriental culture the central position. In the past, China immodestly considered herself the center of the world, with cruelly harsh results. Toynbee quotes a letter from the Qing emperor Qianlong (1711–99) to the English king as evidence of the arrogance and ignorance of the Qing court, which was later brought down by strong Western ships and movable cannon. In the final analysis, any egoistic philosophy is mistaken. World civilization is diverse. Ethnic cultures are varied and various. We will have global peace, ethnic cultures will develop, and the world will be richer and more varied only when all cultural and ethnic groups respect and learn from each other.

East Asian Historical Heritage

Ikeda: I fully agree that joint learning among all the nations and ethnic groups of the world builds a richer, peaceful world. When learning stops, stagnation begins. This is true of individuals, societies, and civilizations. New progress occurs as part of the respiration of continuous learning, from which fresh creative powers well up like an inexhaustible spring.

In our discussions, Professor Toynbee frankly admitted that he could not avoid taking a Western viewpoint. That is why he was eager to learn oriental wisdom from candid talks with a young man like me, both an Easterner and a Mahayana Buddhist believer.

While looking on all other civilizations, including the Indian and the Islamic, with fond respect, he was especially interested in Chinese civi-

lization. In praising the historical heritage of East Asia, particularly of China, he set forth the following eight points:

1. The Chinese people's experience, during the last twenty-one centuries of maintaining an empire that is a regional model for a literally worldwide world-state.
2. The ecumenical spirit with which the Chinese have been imbued during this long chapter of Chinese history.
3. The humanism of the Confucian Weltanschauung.
4. The rationalism of both Confucianism and Buddhism.
5. The sense of the mystery of the universe and the recognition that human attempts to dominate the universe are self-defeating.
6. The conviction that, far from trying to dominate nonhuman nature, man's aim should be to live in harmony with it.
7. The demonstration that it is possible for East-Asian peoples to beat the Western peoples at the Westerners' own modern game of applying science to both civilian and military technology.
8. The courage shown in daring to challenge the West.

These points are all pertinent to the twenty-first century. Points one and two indicate how, while experiencing dynastic ups and downs, for many centuries China has maintained and developed a broad cultural state embracing the civilizations of diverse, surrounding, ethnic groups. In the years to come, this unique Chinese example must find application in the name of world peace.

As a widespread example of the globalist spirit, the overseas Chinese (*huaqiao*) come to mind. Among my friends in Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and North America are many such people who, while proud of their ethnicity, actively contribute to their local societies in exemplary fashions. Their dispersal far and wide suggests a part of the globalist spirit pulsating in China. His points three through six reveal how the humanism and rationalism of Confucianism and Buddhism as well as the harmony and symbiosis permeating such Far-Eastern religions as Daoism and Shinto can become spiritual pillars of a pan-human civilization. As he states in his seventh and eighth points, today global peace and prosperity require greater manifestation of the superior wisdom and courage of East-Asian peoples. For example, at the present time, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean products in fields like information technology and automobiles are to be found all over the world. Professor Toynbee hoped that, in the next stage, the excellent traits that made this possible will be turned to the building of global peace. He foresaw that the civilizations of the East and the West would, by sublating each other, advance towards a civilization

more elevated in both material and spiritual aspects. Moreover, he discerned East Asia—especially China—as the axis of the process. I profoundly agree with him. The path is uncharted and will not be easy. Nonetheless, the concept of an East-Asian economic sphere or community is being discussed in various ways. Just as Professor Toynbee predicted, in the twenty-first century, East Asia, and especially China, are going to assume increasingly greater importance. In itself, this is enough to indicate the foresightedness, validity, and brilliance of his idea about the civilization which aims at overcoming the ethnocentrism and the view that the West is the core of history.

East Asia United for Peace

Gu: As you say, Toynbee praised the Sino-centric East Asian historical heritage highly. Indeed, many of the world's famous thinkers have turned their attention to China as the largest Asian nation, which, with five thousand years of history, is the starting point of one of the four great civilizations. Voltaire (1694–1778) lauded China highly and devoted many pages to a discussion of its history and political system in his *La philosophie de l'histoire* (1765). The British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) also had high praise for Chinese culture. In *The Problem of China*, a result of his visit there in 1921, he commented admiringly that the Chinese are less eager to dominate others than the white peoples are. He listed three characteristics of traditional Chinese civilization: 1. The use of ideographs in place of an alphabetical script. 2. The replacement of religion with the Confucian ethics of the literati. 3. Government by members of the literati class chosen by examinations instead of by a hereditary aristocracy. In terms of their evaluation of China, Voltaire and Russell share much with what Toynbee wrote.

Basically I agree with your splendid synthesis of Toynbee's eight points. But I should like to supplement it. Comprehensiveness is the major characteristic of Chinese culture. According to a Chinese proverb, the sea receives a hundred rivers. Owing to the vastness of its boundaries, from ancient times, China has included diverse regional environments. Between 7000 and 2300 BCE, within those boundaries three great cultural groups formed: the Huaxia (China proper), the Dongyi (eastern barbarians), and the Nanman (southern barbarians). Further subdivided, these groups were made up of the Yangsho culture in the central plains, the Longshan culture in the east, the Liangzhu culture in the Jiangsu-Zhejiang region, and the Bashu culture in the west. Through mutual intercourse, all these regional cultures coalesced to form the Chi-

nese (Zhonghua) civilization, which continued to absorb external cultures for millennia with immortalizing and increasingly enriching effects.

The late Qing dynasty philosopher Liang Qichao (1873–1929) wrote that, while it would be another story if China refuses outside influence, as long as she does accept such influences, she absolutely must absorb only the best, make it a source of self-nourishment, alter its nature, and put it to work in wonderful ways. China could then form a new kind of civilization. He added that the blue dye comes from the indigo but is bluer than indigo and that ice comes from water but is colder.

The eastward transmission of Buddhism illustrates my meaning in a readily understood manner. The basic ideas of Buddhism contradict traditional Chinese culture. Whereas Buddhism emphasizes the world to come, Chinese culture stresses the present world. Both, however, share one point in common. Buddhism encourages people to do good; Confucianism teaches people to become virtuous and good. In China, Buddhism experienced repeated clashes and fusions to evolve into something even more splendid than it had been before.

The influence of Confucianism had a transforming effect on Chinese Buddhism. After the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), by way of the Silk Road, China absorbed Arabian culture from the Middle East. As you point out, in its inclusiveness, Chinese civilization manifests a global spirit. I hope that in the years to come it will apply this experience fully for the sake of world peace.

Another characteristic of Chinese culture is the belief in harmony within diversity. This means that, though harmony is prized, uniformity is not imposed. At the same time, harmful extremism is rejected and moderation valued. The creation of new things is possible only through harmony and good balance in which diverse things cooperate naturally. When brought together, identical things clash, thus preventing further development. The situation resembles choral singing, which is pleasing to hear because different voices blend harmoniously. Diverse flavors combine in harmony to make exciting, delicious food. In Confucian thought, harmony depends on moderation, maintaining a middle course, and shunning extremes. The Chinese today, too, prize harmony and moderation as model regulators of human relations.

While keeping an eye on the total picture and the interests of all, China has promoted harmony and stability among its 56 ethnic groups. In addition, the People's Republic of China has encouraged amicable dealings with the peoples of other nations. Zhou Enlai applied this principle of peace and moderation to international relations when, as one of

his five principles of peace proclaimed at the Bandung Asian-African Conference of 1955, he spoke of overlooking minor differences for the sake of the greater good.

In this regard, my observation seems to be in complete agreement with your summary of what Professor Toynbee said about the outstanding wisdom, courage, and power of the East Asian peoples. I wholeheartedly agree with him that the humanism and rationalism of Confucianism and Buddhism as well as the harmony and symbiosis permeating such Far-Eastern religions as Daoism and Shinto can become spiritual pillars of a pan-human civilization.

Professor Toynbee had a very high regard for East-Asian civilization, which undeniably contains many examples of outstanding insight. I believe that any civilization is capable of continuous development on its own conditions. He expressed the process of development as generation (genesis), growth, decline, and rebirth (palingenesia). Chinese culture, too, went through the same process and, though experiencing periods of decline over the millennia, has lived and maintained unbroken continuity. Although outstanding in many of its aspects, Chinese culture has numerous backward areas that fail to meet the needs of the current age. Therefore the Chinese people must be moderate and sincere and modestly learn from the advanced cultures of the world.

I think East Asia is all the more eager to rise in the world precisely because of the oppression it has undergone from the West in the modern age. Today we have developed, and the world is once again aware of the importance of our cultures. The nations of East Asia must come together to contribute to global peace. Proclaiming peace, in keeping with the Chinese philosophy of prizing harmony and the middle way, we must never despise or bully other countries or ethnic groups.

Ikeda: I am most impressed by your characterization of Chinese culture as inclusive like a sea that receives a hundred rivers and as prizing harmony and the middle way. Traditional to the Chinese people, these two traits are treasured in Buddhist thought as well. The idea of union and harmony can certainly make great contributions to world development in the years to come.

Many Buddhist scriptures employ the metaphor of the sea and rivers in discussing the characteristics of the Dharma. For example, Nichiren Buddhism explains the inclusiveness of the sea in this way: “One drop of the great ocean contains all the five flavors.”³

Whereas a river has but one flavor, the ocean is inclusive enough to contain all five (sweet, sour, bitter, piquant, and salty). It is also written

that, “All rivers flow into the sea, but does the sea turn back their waters?”⁴ In other words, the ocean accepts tributary streams but never pushes water back into them. It is inclusive enough to accept them all. Found throughout Buddhist history, metaphors of this kind are employed to explain the inclusivity of the Lotus Sutra.

In Buddhist philosophy, the concepts of causal origination and the Middle Way correspond to your idea of prizing harmony and moderation. The fundamental doctrine of causal origination means that all things are mutually interdependent and weave a dynamic harmony manifesting the true nature of the cosmos. On the basis of this doctrine, Buddhism actualizes the philosophy of symbiosis and teaches how to live according to the Middle Way between the extremes of asceticism and hedonism. This is the Way that Shakyamuni pointed out.

The Indian Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna developed an ontological concept of the Middle Way which does not side with existence or nonexistence. The Chinese priest Tiantai Zhiyi (538–97) developed the doctrine of the Triple Truth which covers both the phenomenal and the inner worlds: the truth of non-substantiality, the truth of temporary existence and the truth of the Middle Way. This doctrine is the model for human life lived according to the Middle Way.

Thus the Buddhist doctrines of causal origination and the Middle Way developed while being absorbed into Chinese thinking and philosophy. Tiantai reached full flower in a way that embodies the spirit of Chinese Buddhism. This is why I see in it a comprehension of the spirits of the Buddhist Middle Way and the popular Chinese devotion to harmony and moderation.

2. DEFINITIONS AND ORIGINS OF CIVILIZATIONS AND CULTURES

Ikeda: Before initiating a discussion of civilizational history, I should like to establish definitions of culture and civilization. As you point out, there are more than 200 definitions of culture, and the task of defining these two terms is by no means easy. What follows is only a summary made for the purposes of advancing our dialogue.

The Chinese characters used to write the words *wenhua* (*bunka* in Japanese) or culture mean guiding and teaching without penalty and authoritarianism. Those used to write civilization, *wenming* (*bunmei* in Japanese) refer to a world in which civility shines and culture permeates all. The custom of using these terms as keywords in the explanation of human society, however, is of recent date. For example, in Japan translating *bunmei* and *bunka* with the English words *civilization* and *culture*

came into vogue against the background of the Western Enlightenment and the formation of modern nation states in the latter half of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century. In contrast to the undeveloped and barbarian, the French emphasized the ideas of enlightenment, progress, and cultivation as *civilisation* and the Germans, as *Kultur*. In Japan, works like Yukichi Fukuzawa's (1835–1901) *Bunmeiron no Gairyaku* (An Outline of a Theory of Civilization) popularized English and French theories of civilization and enlightenment. Later, with the introduction of German thought and philosophy, the idea of *Kultur* as something stressing internal spirituality and artistic qualities permeated the country. Reflecting this historical trend, the Japanese language came to attach to the word *civilization* (*bunmei*) nuances related to material progress and to the word *culture* (*bunka*) nuances pertaining to intellectual and spiritual activities. Of course, it is possible to separate spiritual civilization—Confucian civilization, Christian civilization, and so on—from scientific and material civilization. Doing so makes it impossible simply to equate civilization with material things. It is equally impossible to make a sharp distinction between civilization (*bunmei*) and culture (*bunka*). The meanings of the two terms overlap, though *civilization* implies value judgments of the kind inherent in discussions of enlightenment. Hypothetically, therefore, we can think of civilization as a framework completing and integrating all cultural aspects. Also, all the fruits of human activities like religion, philosophy, education, arts, and science and technology, although they differ in their manifestations, can be regarded as culture.

You agree with Professor Zhang Dainian (1909–2004) of Peking University that culture is the system of spiritual and practical activities humanity takes in processing relations with people and the world. He states that it is also both the totality of the material and spiritual fruits created by that system and the dialectical integration of the system and results of those activities. Things like religion, language, and customs are included within this system of spiritual and practical action. Ultimately, he states that culture is the actions of humanity and the results of those actions. I believe that this is an adequate definition for our needs.

Civilization and Culture Are Hard To Separate

Gu: I agree with your view that the concepts of civilization and culture overlap closely. Actually, culture, too, includes material results of human activity. As many Chinese scholars today recognize, culture has three dimensions: the material, the systemic, and the spiritual. To these

three, some people argue that we ought to add a fourth: that of customary conduct. Culture develops in a ceaseless process of transmission and acceptance. They are different in that civilization is more actualized and material than culture. Personally, I think the term *civilization* is used as a contrast to barbarism. During the Neolithic age—ten thousand to four thousand years ago—human progress left the age of dark ignorance and entered the age of civilization. This was the time of the emergence of the world's four great ancient cultures. In other words, this was the time when humanity can be said to have started having culture. Civilization is the manifestation of culture. In a sense, then, civilization and culture are synonymous. The *Cihai* (Sea of Words) dictionary, issued by the publishing house Zhonghua Shuju in 1936, gives *wenhua* (culture) as the first definition of *wenming* (civilization). The second definition states that *wenming* means the state in which human society has progressed beyond the savage (*yeman*). Ordinarily, when we criticize a person's coarse behavior we call it uncivilized. If there is a clear distinction between civilization and culture, it is that the civilized always indicates the excellent and positive side of culture, whereas culture can include retarded and negative elements as well.

With your profound knowledge of Chinese culture, you thoroughly understand the connotations of the characters used to write the words *culture* and *civilization*. It is true that the use of the characters *wen* and *hua* in the Chinese word for culture evolved from ancient Chinese practices of avoiding penalties and armed force in governance.

The *Cihai* gives as the first definition of *culture* guidance and governance without resort to force. In the *Zhiwu* volume of *Shuoyuan* (Garden of Stories), a collection of moral tales and political persuasions by the scholar Liu Xiang (d. 5 BCE), it is written that winning submission by means of martial power is impossible and that deadly force should be applied only when *wenhua* (culture as the virtues of learning) fails to effect a change in the other person's attitude. Governance without force was the way feudal dynasties maintained control. Naturally, it is not interpreted in this way now.

There is a great gap in meaning between the English words *civilization* and *culture*. After the emergence of the bourgeois class, *civilization* frequently meant the cultivated and enlightened in contrast to the savage and benighted. Whereas the two Chinese words even look alike, both beginning with the character *wen*, meaning written language, the different roots of the two English words are apparent in their very written forms.

Ikeda: The character for *bun* (*wen*) is said to represent a human being seen from the front. This suggests that the written forms of both *civilization* (*bunmei*) and *culture* (*bunka*) symbolize humanity. To trace the origins of both, I should like to turn to ancient history, specifically to the famous four great irrigational civilizations of China, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley. Roughly speaking from 4000 to 3000 BCE, agriculture made possible by the blessings of great rivers—the Yellow River, the Yangzi, the Tigris and Euphrates, the Nile, and the Indus—resulted in an accumulation of wealth that created a basis for urbanization and early dynastic forms. Under the influence of the Orient (Egypt and Mesopotamia), the Mediterranean civilization emerged and developed into the Grecian civilization. After the downfall of the Indus civilization, Aryans from the North moved in to give birth to the ancient Indian civilization of the Ganges region. Between the eighth and second centuries BCE, these fertile civilizations generated numerous ways of thought that proved of great importance to world history. China witnessed the emergence of Confucius, Laozi, Mozi, Zhuangzi, and Lizi. In India, the Upanishadic philosophers and Shakyamuni emerged, as did Zoroaster in Iran and the Old Testament prophets in Palestine. Philosophy was enriched in Greece by the Naturalists and philosophers, like Socrates, his student Plato, and Aristotle. Athens experienced a high cultural flourishing and the development of democracy. The German philosopher Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) called this era the Axial Age. We must remember, too, the Meso-American civilization that emerged at about 1000 BCE and the Andean civilization of South America of about 2000 BCE, which bring the total of great ancient civilizations to six. Later, other regional civilizations emerged and flourished: for instance, the Western civilization based on Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions, the Hindu civilizations of South Asia, and the Muslim civilization of the Middle East.

With some reservations, Arnold J. Toynbee listed a total of 21 civilizations, some of which have vanished and some of which still survive. (He later revised his list first to 23 and still later to 31.) Oswald Spengler (1880–1936), however, who influenced Toynbee, listed only eight great civilizations.

In human history, civilizations have flourished in diverse ways. Some collapsed, for instance the Andean after the incursions of the Europeans. Others, like the Chinese, have persisted in recurring processes of encounter, collision, and mutation. Today, too, various cultures and civilizations exist in a pluralism of ways. I believe that Samuel P. Huntington was mistaken in assuming a clash of civilizations and am certain

such clashes can be averted.

Gu: Of the four generally recognized great ancient civilizations—Egypt, Mesopotamia (Babylonia), India, and China—some disappeared and some survived. How is this to be explained? Put simply, in his *A Study of History*, Toynbee argues that natural or manmade disaster (war, for example) caused some to fall or to be replaced by others. Of course, as he further argues, civilizations already contain within themselves the seeds of their own diversion or destruction but that their fruits (culture) survive. For instance, ancient Egyptian civilization underwent many changes. Invasion by the Macedonians in 332 BCE merged it with the Greco-Roman civilization. Then, in 639 CE, invasion by Arabs resulted in gradual Arabization. Nonetheless, ancient Egyptian culture continues to shine and has had important influences on Western and African civilizations.

As you say, between the eighth and second centuries BCE many important philosophers appeared. The civilizations in which they lived have changed or fallen. But their spiritual ideas live on.

Civilizations represent group human activities. Cultures are the material results of their concerted spiritual and practical activities. Though civilizations may cease or be destroyed, the spiritual and material riches they created remain. Zhang Dainian defines culture as the system of spiritual and practical activities born of processing relations with people and the world, the totality of the material and spiritual fruits created by that system, and the dialectical integration of the system and the results of these actions. I agree with this definition because it is all-inclusive. In other words, it integrates the system of human activity and the solid results of such action. In addition, it emphatically states that the system of human actions and their results have spiritual and material aspects.

Confucianism and the Essence of Culture

Ikeda: You perceive that, even after a civilization collapses or is suspended, its culture in the form of the spiritual and material products of human activities survives. Your insight is fascinating in connection with the theme of tradition and modernity. Generally, the idea of culture is strongly associated with the traditional. But, if we think of it as constantly changing, culture is not necessarily antithetical to modernity. In fact, the vital force of a culture can be said to depend on its maintaining tension between the traditional (the conservative and durable) and the modern (the self-renewing). To borrow Professor Toynbee's terms, new

cultures and civilizations are born precisely as the result of responding to and withstanding (overcoming) the severe challenges of the present. You assign two aspects to culture; that is, fixed ethnicity and periodicity changing with the times. In addition, in an excellent hypothesis plotting a complex process, you specify four stages in the transmission and transition of cultures: introduction, selection, discovery, and creation. An unavoidable challenge arises from encounters with other cultures and the vicissitudes of time. A culture obsessed with transmission only and rigidly averse to self-alteration must decline. On the other hand, a culture that boldly pursues the process of responding by means of choice, discovery, and creativity gives birth to new cultural vitality. Explained in this way, your hypothesis can be seen to correspond to Professor Toynbee's theory of challenge and response.

The undeniable revival of Confucianism in modern times must be considered in connection with civilizational and cultural challenge and response or cultural development. Confucianism is the essence of Chinese spiritual culture. In Japan, we frequently hear reports of recent growing enthusiasm for its study in China. Furthermore, in September 2009, on the 2,560th anniversary of Confucius' birth, *The Confucius Genealogy*, with over a decade of collecting and collating endeavor, was renewed after a lapse of 72 years.

Countries all over the world face social problems and ethical decline that accompany exclusive concentration on economic development and love of money. This is indeed one of the challenges confronting all of modern civilization. Confucianism is a Chinese spiritual mainstay. Restoring that spirit can amount to a Chinese-civilizational response to the severe challenges facing contemporary society. In the terms of your theory, it can amount to a process of discovery and creativity.

Recently I shared with Professor Tu Weiming of Harvard a discussion on such topics as the Confucian renaissance. Professor Tu cited two facts as epoch-making. One is that the China National Education Commission recognized Confucianism as a legitimate area of scholarly research in 1987. The other is that a ten-year plan for the study of a revival of Confucian humanism was initiated.

Surviving violent oppression, like famous burning of the books and burying of Confucians alive under the first Qin emperor Shi Huangdi, Confucianism became the foundation of the nation during the former Han dynasty (202 BCE–8 CE). It continued to be the national spiritual pillar until, together with most aspects of the Chinese past, it was subjected to violent criticism in the wave of modernization after the nineteenth century. As you know, the celebrated author Lu Xun, too, con-

demned the feudal system founded on Confucianism.

Now, in the twenty-first century however, many people are eagerly turning their attention to Confucianism as the spiritual source of Chinese culture. Having triumphed over the tempestuous twenty and more centuries, Confucianism continues to emanate an undying light. In this I discern the indomitable essence of human culture.

What are your thoughts on the issue of tradition and modernity and on the consequences of a Confucian revival? How can a spiritual revival movement influence society?

Traditional Heritages and New Cultures

Gu: I consider tradition the foundation on which modernization takes place. Toynbee posits a process in which civilizations emerge, grow, decline, then undergo rebirth. This being the case, modernization cannot start from nothing. Even when imported from another country, it begins to be re-formed by the preexisting culture, then stabilizes and advances. For example, in the late nineteenth century, after the Meiji Restoration of 1867, Japan adopted European constitutional monarchy. Nonetheless, it already had preexisting, distinctive, Japanese ethnic traditions and a political system in many regards different from the Western one. Expressive of this duality, Japanese education was permeated with a spirit expressed in the motto *Japanese Soul and Western Knowledge*.

It is true, however, that tradition sometimes inhibits modernization. Cultural traditions are formed of lengthy historical accretions to become models exerting a profound influence on social reality. Much of their content is old and includes a basic ethnic spirit. For this reason, the modernization process is conducted with constant attention to discrimination, selection, and reform of ancient cultural traditions. This means selecting, passing on, and improving what is good while rejecting and abandoning elements that are out of date or contrary to the demands of the times. Thus it is essential to build a new culture responsive to the needs of the epoch by updating and perfecting the superior things from the past. In building a modern nation, we must stress the importance of the correct treatment of relations between the traditional and the new.

The recent rise in interest in national study (research in ancient documents) in China reflects the Chinese people's choice in relation to tradition and modernization. As you know, in the process of modernization, at one time, the Chinese overemphasized tradition's negative role. For a while, everything traditional was rejected in favor of all-out Westernization. During the Cultural Revolution, young revolutionaries inflicted

immense cultural damage in their efforts to destroy what was called the Four Olds, that is, old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas. As is painfully apparent, after the chaos of the Cultural Revolution had passed and society returned to normalcy, this destruction proved profoundly disadvantageous not only to the cultivation of ethnic cultural qualities, but also to modernization. For this reason, many intellectuals now strive to restore the greatness of Chinese culture by stressing its excellent spirit and advocating the virtues of Chinese tradition.

I discern two aspects in the current interest in national studies. The first aspect includes the dissemination of knowledge, the transmission of the traditional cultural spirit, and the elevation of popular civilization attainments by sponsoring awareness of an identity with the virtues of the cultural tradition. For instance, primary-school children in many parts of the country are being taught to recite passages from the classical writings. The second aspect entails encouraging national studies to train teachers capable of transmitting and developing Chinese written culture.

The core of Chinese traditional culture is Confucianism, and I believe that Confucian culture passed through three stages of development. The first or original stage, the age of Confucius (Kongzi), Mencius (Mengzi), and Xunzi, centered on doctrines of humaneness (*ren*) and ritual (*li*). The second was the age of the Han emperor Wu (156–87 BCE). During this stage, the scholar Dong Zhongshu (179–104 BCE) advocated the elimination of other schools of thought and the unique worthiness of Confucianism, which he characterized as embodied in the three roles and the five humanities. The three roles are that of sovereign, who must be a model to his ministers; father, who must be a model to his sons; and husband, who must be a model to his wife. In the five humanities—humaneness, righteousness, ritual, wisdom, and trust—he developed the whole sequence of feudal ethics and morality. During the third stage, the Neo-Confucianism of the Song (960–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties taught that the understanding of the true nature of the universe and human beings will lead to the elimination of human desires. This teaching had a rigidifying effect.

The current interest in national studies in China, with its emphasis on the Confucian heritage, is not an attempt to revive the past. Far less does it advocate feudal morality. Instead it is an attempt to stimulate the popular spirit by extolling traditional Chinese virtues and reviving and transmitting the excellent spirit of the traditional culture. Through selection and reform, persisting feudal abuses can be eliminated and modern significances appended to the traditional cultural heritage as a foundation for modernization and the building of a new culture.

During the past decade or so, efforts on the part of society as a whole, stress on education, and media transmissions have led local governing bodies and the masses in various parts of the country to concentrate on traditional culture. As a result, efforts are being made both to protect cultural relics throughout the country and to stress the importance of our intangible heritage. Schools are engaging in various activities to instruct young people in their culture through reading classical texts aloud and including more and more traditional cultural elements in classwork. I hope, however, that this support for Chinese studies will avoid revivalism and formalism. Time and society move forward. We cannot turn back history. In such studies and in the promotion of Confucianism, the thing we must pass on is the basic spirit. Of course this spirit pervades many elements of our material cultural heritage and our custom. Nonetheless, we have no need to return to the conditions of the past.

3. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN JAPAN AND CHINA

The Developmental Process of Japanese Culture

Ikeda: As you imply, unless maintained in a developmental, creative fashion, any cultural tradition can go wrong. This is why exchanges with other cultures and civilizations are indispensable. In “The Pursuit of the Ideal,” the Russian-born English philosopher Isaiah Berlin (1909–97) wrote that human beings can rationally and humanely sympathize mutually with each other’s numerous and diverse goals. In this he agreed with your own idea that cultures should enhance their prosperity by mutual exchanges and learning among themselves. I have continued engaging in cross-cultural dialogues throughout the world because I am certain that, since they all share good elements, human beings can connect and can enlighten each other.

Cultural exchanges stimulate development. To substantiate this statement, borrowing your theory of the process of civilizational development entailing introduction, selection, discovery, and creation, I should like to examine briefly some epochs in the history of the development of Japanese culture.

On the evening of May 8, 2008, I discussed youth and cultural exchanges with President Hu Jintao of the People’s Republic of China, who was visiting Japan at the time. On the afternoon of that same day, he had delivered a memorial address at Waseda University, offering congratulations on the establishment of the Year of Amicable Sino-Japanese Youth Exchanges. In it, he expressed the following ideas. “The people

of Japan are notably studious, creative, and abundantly endowed with wisdom and the will to improve. Roughly fourteen hundred years ago, they sent emissaries to Sui- and Tang-dynasty China to study the local system of laws and ordinances, Buddhism, the writing system, and various technologies. At home, introducing what they learned, they formed a distinctive Japanese culture suited to indigenous circumstances. After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan became the first Asian nation to modernize by learning and absorbing the civilization of the industrialized nations. Then, though not large in area, Japan achieved a degree of development that captured world attention.”⁶

I am sincerely grateful to President Hu for his warm interest in Japan and should like to take this chance to reiterate my extreme respect for China, to which we Japanese are culturally deeply indebted. As he implied, the literature, technology, and thought introduced by people from China and the Korean Peninsula exerted a tremendous influence on ancient Japan. Among them, I stress the importance of the full-scale absorption of Buddhism and Confucianism that, occurring in the sixth century, stimulated a true cultural awakening. Prince Shōtoku (573–621), the regent who compiled the so-called Seventeen-article Constitution, which became a Japanese spiritual mainstay, accepted Buddhism and Confucianism (your stages of introduction, selection, and discovery) and created a unified nation. The first article of the constitution states, “Harmony is to be valued, and the avoidance of wanton opposition to be honoured,” echoing this passage in the Confucian Analects : “Harmony is the value of performing the rites.”⁷ The second article inculcates faith in the Buddhist teachings: “Sincerely revere the three treasures: the Buddha, his Teaching, and the ordained Community.”

There is some dispute about Prince Shōtoku’s authorship of another famous work traditionally attributed to him; that is, the Annotated Commentaries on the Three Sutras (the *Hokke Gisho*, the *Shōmangyō Gisho*, and the *Yuimagyō Gisho*). There can be no doubt, however, that the work cultivated Japanese spirituality and ethics through its profound understanding of the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism.

From his time, Japan became a Buddhist nation and, continuing to adopt Buddhist ideas by means of exchanges with China, developed a distinctive, flourishing Buddhist philosophy during the subsequent Nara (710–94) and Heian (794–1185) periods, and based on it a unique Japanese Buddhist philosophy called Kamakura Buddhism bloomed. These traditions were carried forward into the Muromachi (1336–1573) and Edo (1603–1868) periods.

The process of selection that you mention was at work in the Taika reforms of 645, which adopted the ancient Chinese legal system of penal and administrative codes and skillfully modified them to suit local needs and conditions.

During the Heian period, a distinctive writing system combining Chinese characters with syllabaries evolved to meet the requirements of the inflected nature of the Japanese language. Here again, we can apply your process. The Japanese introduced the Chinese logographs. Then, reexamining their own ancient traditional culture, they selected what they needed and created a new national literary culture that reached a high peak in the *Tale of Genji* (*Genji Monogatari*), the oldest extended novel in the world; the masterful collection of essays known as the *Pillow Book* (*Makura no Sōshi*); and the imperial poetry anthology called the *Kokinshū*. Mahayana philosophy, including primarily that of the Lotus Sutra, influenced the background against which this flowering occurred.

Confucianism was introduced in the ancient period and amplified by Japanese scholarly emissaries to China and visiting Chinese scholars. Over a long time, it melded with local daily life to cultivate a profound ethical sense. Of special note is the Neo-Confucianism introduced into Japan at a much later date. It became the official learning of the Edo shogunate and was disseminated among the masses by so-called temple schools (*terakoya*). One reason for this development was the stress placed on Neo-Confucianism as official learning by the Ming (1368–1544) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties. Neo-Confucianism taught that, when the nature of virtue is clearly apparent, humans can be as virtuous as Yao and Shun, the great sage rulers of antiquity. In adopting Neo-Confucianism, the Japanese applied the process of selection, discovery, and creation. Though responsive to the clear expression of virtues like humaneness (*ren*), the Japanese showed less interest in the Neo-Confucian idea that investigation of the nature of things leads to knowledge and the practice of etiquette. In other words, the Japanese were more interested in learning the spirit than they were in rites.

In his late years, the Japanese Confucian scholar Nakae Tōju (1608–48) tended toward the teachings of Wang Yangming (1472–1529). At the same time, another version of Confucianism, the “Old Learning,” was established, which attempted to return to the old Confucian classics. This version of Confucian philosophy conforms to the Japanese ethnic, spiritual climate. Japan never adopted the Chinese system of bureaucratic examinations.

With the downfall of the shogunal system in the latter half of the

nineteenth century, Japan faced the violent challenge of an encounter with Western scientific, technological civilization. Modern Japan took shape as a response to that challenge. The influence of Western civilization extended from the effects of scientific technology on the basic aspects of daily life to law, the economy, military affairs, education, medicine, and welfare. After World War II, under American influence, scientific technology made great strides in a broad range of fields from heavy industry to electronics. Japan compensated for its poverty in natural resources by succeeding in manufacture and trade. This, too, may be described as a process of introduction, selection, discovery, and creation. But excessive pursuit of national wealth and lack of attention to the happiness of the ordinary people dragged Japan into a grievous war during which immense suffering was inflicted on China and other Asian nations. This is a page of history that we must never forget.

Cultural Interchange as the Setting for the Development of Chinese Culture

Gu: In a retrospective of the development of Japanese history, you have explained how elements absorbed from other countries and ethnicities were selected and re-formed in the creation of a culture distinctive to Japan. I am pleased that what you say endorses my theory of introduction, selection, discovery, and creation. As President Hu Jintao expressed in his speech at Waseda University, the history of Japan's development is eloquent proof that the Japanese people are extraordinarily studious and creative and abundantly endowed with the will to improve. On my twenty or so visits to Japan—the longest lasted four months—I have had occasion to experience personally the correctness of his remarks. I am amazed at the way your people have skillfully connected tradition and modernization. You have said that, owing to Confucian influence and the adoption of things like Neo-Confucian philosophy, Japanese culture is greatly obliged to China. But the reverse, too, can be said. In the process of modernization, China has learned a great deal from Japan.

Modern education in China started with schools set up by Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—at the end of the Qing dynasty—but the new system of education was imported from Japan. The first pedagogical books were the works of the Japanese educator Tachibana Senzaburō (1867–1901 or 02) translated by the Chinese scholar Wang Guowei (1977–1927). Numerous Chinese students studying in Japan from the end of the Qing till the first years of the

Republic of China brought many new ideas home with them. Your people supported the democratic revolution led by Sun Yatsen (1866–1925). Japan can be said to have been China's instructor in modernization.

Culture develops as the outcome of an unbroken process of exchange and reciprocal learning. With its very long history, Chinese culture was almost completely organized before the Qin dynasty (221–206 BCE) and has exerted a great influence on all of East Asia. Within its gradual process of formation and change, it has blended with the cultures of various ethnic groups and absorbed elements from other cultures.

The Chinese world of historical scholarship is of diverse opinions concerning the process and its chronology. In the preface to the four-volume *Zhonghua Wenming-shi* (A History of Chinese Civilization), edited by a group of scholars including Yuan Xingpei, it is said that any consideration of the history of Chinese civilization must be made within the larger framework of world civilization. The book goes on to say that the transition of Chinese civilization constitutes a multidimensional structure including the combination of diverse ethnic groups, the absorption of outside civilizations, a continuity of the elegant and the vulgar, and revival as reform. Archeology has proved that Chinese culture originated not only in the Yellow River basin, but also in the Yangzi basin and that it includes some elements from the civilizations of nomadic minority groups as well. Within a process of change, instead of annihilating each other, these diverse elements have integrated to constitute a multidimensional unity, the latest form of which had already taken shape in the Western Zhou dynasty (1045–771 BCE). The *Zhonghua Wenming-shi* identifies two aspects of the transition process in Chinese civilization as worthy of note.

First is the melding of ethnic groups. Second is the absorption of foreign cultures. In my own book, the English title of which is *The Cultural Foundation of Chinese Education*, I summarize formation and transition in Chinese culture. I briefly introduce mutual cultural and civilizational exchanges. First come the birth and early stages lasting from approximately 7000 to 2300 BCE. This stage witnessed the formation of three cultural groupings on the Chinese mainland: The *Huaxia*, the *Dongyi* (in the east) and the *Miao* (in the south). All three belonged to clan cultures that, at the time, used fire and made vessels of stone, wood, bone, and clay. They had primitive religions and worshipped ancestors and totems. Symbolic, totemic representations of dragons have been found from that early time.

Many scholars consider the Zhou dynasty (1045–256 BCE), which witnessed the establishment of a patriarchic clan system, a time of tran-

sition in central focus from divinities to human beings. During it, the social structure gradually changed from primitive clan commune to a hierarchical, slave-owning, patriarchic society. The system of rites and music (later called “the study of rites”) that evolved coeval with this development later became the foundation of Confucianism.

The Spring and Autumn (770–403 BCE) and Warring States (403–221 BCE) periods were times of contention among the so-called Hundred Schools of Thought. They were also a time of agricultural development, as the iron plough replaced the wooden one. While the Zhou dynasty weakened, local lords held sway in their own territories, thus preventing national unification. Agricultural administration shifted from the so-called *jingtian* (well-field) system according to which farmers tended fields from which they received the harvests while cooperating to care for one centrally located plot, the fruits of which went to the aristocratic owner, to the *mingtian* system, according to which land ownership was determined on the basis of aristocratic title. In the realm of learning, diverse schools of thought flourished, including Naturalists (Yinyang), Confucianists, Mohists, Logicians (School of Names), Legalists, and Philosophical Daoists. Though they all contended vociferously for a while, their later gradual absorption into each other facilitated great forward strides in scholarly thought. This extraordinarily brilliant period can be said to have laid the foundation for Chinese culture.

The next phase witnessed the establishment of mainstream Confucianism. After long years of warring, Ying Zhen, king of Qin, was victorious, accomplishing the great feat of unifying China. As Qin Shi Huangdi, or the First Qin Emperor (259–210 BCE), he launched a program of political reforms and the creation of cultural policies. He standardized the writing system, the currency, the system of weights and measures, and the lengths of cart axles. These steps had immeasurable impact on Chinese culture. After the death of Qin Shi Huangdi, during the reign of the emperor Wu (156–87 BCE) of the Western Han dynasty, a unified China guided by Confucian ideas firmed up the basis for a traditional culture that lasted for more than two millennia.

Upon its introduction into China during the Western Han, Buddhism delivered the first shock Confucianism was to experience. Because it met the needs of ruling groups during the turbulent period of the Wei, Jin, and Southern and Northern dynasties (220–589) it spread far and wide.

As I have already pointed out, the two are essentially different: Buddhism teaches about the world to come, and Confucianism propounds the reality of the present. Whereas family and home are fundamental to

Confucianism, Buddhism concerns ascetics (*bhikkhu*) living apart from their families. But, owing to repeated collisions, Buddhism gradually absorbed Confucian ideas, quietly forming connections with Chinese traditional ethics and incorporating many Chinese characteristics. At the same time, Buddhism had incalculable influences on Chinese philosophy, literature, art, and architecture.

The period from the Wei to the Southern and Northern dynasties was a time of great fusion among the peoples of China. Various northern ethnic groups moved into the central plains, where they supported adoption of the culture of the Han Chinese in order to solidify their political authority in the states they founded. In the dynamic fusion process, the Han Chinese adopted many cultural elements from the northern tribes, thus enriching Chinese culture as a whole.

The Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) dynasties, during which eastern and western cultures intermingled, introduced a dynamic, majestic golden age of Chinese culture. The system of bureaucratic examinations opened positions of power to intelligent individuals from the middle and lower classes, enabling even qualified poor people to participate actively in politics. The Tang was an age of supreme activity in poetry and painting. During that same age, the essence of Western culture reached China by way of the Silk Road, while Chinese paper, silk, gunpowder, and metallurgy reached Europe by way of the Middle East. Traffic not only became frequent with the Western regions, but also grew close with many Eastern countries. For instance, Japan, the Goryeo kingdom on the Korean peninsula, and Vietnam frequently sent envoys to Tang China. Exchanges and unifications with the many ethnic groups noted in connection with the period between the Wei and the Southern and Northern dynasties resulted in bold cultural adoption that made China all the more open and inclusive. This had profound significance for the further development of Chinese culture.

Neo-Confucianism, which developed during the Song (960–1269) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties, merged elements of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism after long years of conflict. Song-dynasty Confucians absorbed Buddhist and Daoist ideas, reformed Confucianism, and created Neo-Confucianism. As I have said, they believed that understanding the true nature of the universe and humanity will manifest the nature of heaven's will, which will in turn lead to a destruction of human desire. For them, the highest manifestation of the cosmic nature was political and ethical morality exemplified in the Three Roles and the Five Humanities. But, once things have reached their end, they usually move in the opposite direction, and Neo-Confucianism likewise started

to exert the deleterious effect of straight-laced thinking and a devitalized Confucianism, putting Chinese culture on a path to decline.

In the late Ming and early Qing, Christian missionaries began working in China, bringing with them modern Western science and technology, which clashed with traditional Chinese world views, value criteria, and ways of thinking. Although it followed a course of ups and downs, roughly speaking, the reception of Western culture in China went through three phases: rejection, passivity, and self-awareness. During this first phase of missionary activity, the Qing government and the Confucian intelligentsia rejected Westernization. During the Opium Wars (1839–42 and 1856–60), however, bombardment from Western ships literally broke down China's gates, provoking what was called the Self-strengthening Movement based on the idea that the only way to compete with the Western barbarians was to master their strong point, modern military technology. Finally with the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 and the May Fourth Movement of 1919, Western democratic ideas were actively adopted. With the traditional structure dismantled, Chinese culture launched on a path of modernization.

After a circuitous process of interchange, a new China emerged, making it essential to attack and eliminate the old feudal system. But, in this process, insufficient care was taken to protect and propagate the inherent excellent aspects of traditional culture. The destruction wrought by the Great Cultural Revolution was especially deplorable. But, following the initiation in 1978 of Deng Xiaoping's program of Reforms and Openness (*Gaige Kaifang*), we have striven to synthesize what we experienced and learned in the past and to revive Chinese culture by proclaiming its outstanding qualities to society as a whole, making it the spirit of the nation, and using it in promoting modern construction. Its changing course shows how our culture has developed through repeated clashing and fusions, each instance of which has caused cultural selection and creativity. Generally in these changes, excellent elements have been preserved and rendered even more brilliant through reform and renovation while inferior elements have been eliminated. At present, we are creating a new culture. The process requires us to extol what is best from our own past and absorb outstanding cultural products from all over the world. Revival means not returning to the past, but absorbing what is good wherever it is to be found and, on the basis of our own outstanding traditions, creating a new, progressive culture.

To do this we must hold fast to Reform and Openness. Reform (*Gaige*) means the destruction of old ideas and systems hindering modernization. Openness (*Kaifang*) means dealing with internationalization

and developing broad international exchanges and cooperation. Since this program was instituted, international exchanges have become frequent. All kinds of Western ideas have rushed vigorously into China. Many foreigners now live in and introduce Western culture into cities like Beijing and Shanghai and into other smaller, commercially developed cities. This means we are entering a new age of East-West collision with greater exchange and fusion. I believe this will promote fresh prosperity for Chinese culture.

Ikeda: Your lucid, eloquent presentation reveals how cultures constantly change and create new things as a result of exchanges among many nations and ethnic groups. In your exposition of China's long history you touch on the exchanges between Buddhism and Confucianism. As a Buddhist, I agree with your profound thoughts on the introduction of Buddhism into China and the alterations it underwent there, but should like to add some remarks about the main axis of Buddhist history.

Introduced from India, Buddhism was transformed by mutual interactions with the largely different Chinese culture. Buddhism exerted an immense influence on Chinese thought, literature, art, sculpture, and architecture. At the same time, however, Buddhism, being influenced by Chinese culture, evolved into the brilliance that was Chinese Buddhism. The splendid dialogue between Indian Buddhism and Chinese culture started with the translation of vast numbers of Sanskrit scriptures in what amounts to a philosophical dialogue magnificent in the history of humanity. The serious introduction of Buddhist philosophy got underway in 401, when the famous monk Kumārajīva (344–413 CE) arrived in the capital city Chang'an. Because they employ indigenous Chinese terminology, his translations of Buddhist scriptures enabled the people of China finally to form a correct understanding of such Mahayana concepts as emptiness (*śūnyatā*), the Middle Way, and karma. The imposing flowering of Chinese Buddhism was founded on this immense translation achievement. After an era of warring called the Six Dynasties and in the Sui dynasty (581–618) and Tang dynasty (618–907), Chinese Buddhism departed from its Indian predecessor to become sectarian in nature.

As you know, various scriptures, which continually passed from India along the Silk Road and by way of the so-called Western Regions, or Central Asia, into China, were translated and subjected to comparative classification and evaluation. Chinese Buddhism became characteristically an arena of competition among several sects: Tiantai, centered on the Lotus Sutra; Sanlun, centered on three Madhyamikan texts (The

Treatise on the Middle Way by Nagarjuna, The Treatise on the Twelve Gates also by Nagarjuna, and the One-Hundred-Verse Treatise, by Aryadeva). These were joined in the Tang dynasty by the Pure Land Sect, centered on the Pure Land Sutra; the Huayan Sect, founded on the Sanskrit Flower-Garland Sutra; and the Southern Chan (Zen) sect; the Dharma-character or Faxiang school; and the Jushe school (*Abhidharma-kośa*) school. In the second half of the Tang, Esoteric Buddhism was imported from India.

Most of these sects were transmitted to Korea and then to Japan where they enriched the ethnic spiritual soil. After the age of Prince Shōtoku, Japan witnessed the emergence of the so-called Nara Six Schools. Tendai (Tiantai) and esoteric Shingon (Zhenyan) developed in the Heian period (794–1185). Tendai Buddhism is of special interest because it was the origin of Kamakura period (1185–1333) sects including that of Nichiren.

The Tiantai monk Zhiyi (538–97) pioneered the development of this kind of sectarian Buddhism. He wrote what are called the Three Great Works on the Lotus Sutra: *Great Concentration and Insight* (*Moho Zhiguan*), *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra* (*Fahua Xuanyi*), and *The Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra* (*Fahua Wenzhu*). In these works, while consolidating diverse Buddhist philosophies, he taught the Lotus Sutra doctrine known as the Three Thousand Realms in a Single Thought Moment and established the fundamental theory that the Buddha nature is equally inherent in all sentient beings. He also taught the possibility of attaining an ideal realm in the sorrow-filled actual world of mortality. In short, he propounded the doctrine that life and death are equal to nirvana. In doing this, he concentrated on the laity and opened the way for an earthly Chinese Buddhism.

In his work on the two-thousand-year dialogue between Buddhism and Confucianism, a young and astute scholar Liu Jisheng wrote that, whereas many different schools of thought give Buddhism its great diversity, some have survived only a short while—like the Faxiang (Dharma characteristics) school, others like the Tiantai school, have developed continually, overcoming various hardships in the process. He adds that Tiantai's *Moho Zhiguan* (*The Great Concentration and Insight*), while calling for close observation of the human evil aspects and stern self-introspection, says that, through discipline, even apparently irredeemably evil creatures, as human beings admittedly may be, can all attain Buddhahood. In contrast, Faxiang Buddhism teaches that beings fall into five classes, distinguished by their characteristics, not all of whom can attain Buddhahood. In other words, it rejects the idea that

Buddhahood is attainable by all beings. Tiantai thought corresponds to the Confucian advocacy of the innate goodness enabling anyone to become a sage. Faxiang, on the other hand, stubbornly adhered to its own doctrines, rejecting the idea of fusion with traditional Chinese philosophy, thus setting its own decline in motion. As Professor Liu points out, while taking the Lotus Sutra as its central element, Tiantai thought integrated Buddhist philosophy with traditional Chinese elements like Confucianism and Daoism. In your own discussion of its eastward transmission, you noted a point shared in common by Buddhism and Confucianism: Buddhism encourages people to *do* good and Confucianism teaches them always to try to *be* good.

In *Moho Zhiguan*, Zhiyi compares the Five Humanities that are the source of Confucian ethics with the Buddhist Five Precepts and demonstrates that both encourage goodness in human beings. Buddhism teaches self-improvement and self-reform generating good karma in opposition to delusion and desire, which generate evil karma. It advocates the Ten Good Acts and Five Precepts as means to this end. The Five Precepts are founded on compassion; the Five Humanities rest on the concept of humaneness or *ren*, both of which I hope to discuss further in the next section of our dialogue.

4. HUMANENESS AND COMPASSION: THE SPIRIT OF CULTURE AND HUMANISM

Underlying Chinese Ethnic Attitudes toward Culture

Ikeda: I should like to delve a little more deeply into the characteristics of Chinese culture.

Goethe wrote, “Altogether... national hatred is something peculiar. You will always find it strongest and most violent where there is the lowest degree of culture. But there is a degree where it vanishes altogether, and where one stands to a certain extent *above* nations, and feels the weal or woe of a neighbouring people, as if it had happened to one’s own.”⁸

These thought-stimulating words indicate that the quality of a culture or civilization should be judged on the degree to which it has the inward power to control the barbaric brutality found in peoples and nations. With its five thousand years of history, China can truly be said to have maintained just such a high level of culture and civilization. I referred to this in a speech I made at Peking University in 1984. In characterizing Chinese tradition, I said that the driving force behind Chinese history

has tended to respect cultural above martial matters. With some exceptions, throughout its long annals, Chinese history has maintained cultural power and a moral ethos of esteem for culture that has inhibited lapses into extreme militarism.

In this connection the contemporary novelist Jin Yong once related an interesting fact to me. He said that China has traditionally honored *wen* or civil virtues over *wu* or military ones. For example, at imperial audiences or greeting ceremonies civil officials stood in front of military officials. That is, civil officials took precedence over military ones.

China is proud of its high-level culture and civilization in which civil authorities have controlled the military authorities.

Why did China develop in this way? I believe the source of the culture of precedence to the civil is to be found in the Confucian spirit represented by the concept of humaneness, or *ren*.

The five Confucian fundamentals or humanities are humaneness (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), ritual (*li*), wisdom (*zhi*), and trust (*xin*). As you point out, the nucleus of Confucian theory can be summed up in the single character *ren*. You have also said that its primary spirit is one of self-mastery and love of humanity (*The Cultural Foundation of Chinese Education*). *Ren* is practical ethics for the realization of symbiosis through attitudes of love of humanity, caring, empathy, and sympathy. Such realization requires self-mastery—control of one's desires—and a return to ritual. The process originates with internally generated self-control of desire. The character with which *ren* is written consists of parts meaning two people and indicating the virtue connecting them, as if they were seated calmly on a rug. The relaxation in this situation evolves into repose and benevolence. The spirit of *ren* has cultivated in the Chinese people a powerful ethical sense and has provided the driving force for the creation of a peaceful society that prizes culture and harmony. What are your thoughts on the Chinese tendency to esteem the civil or the cultural?

In Quest of a World Based on Benevolence

Gu: I agree with you when you say that Chinese culture tends to esteem the civil. The source of the tendency can be summed up in the word *ren*, or humaneness, which is the nucleus of Confucian culture. The love of humanity is characteristic of the humane person or the person who has *ren*. Such a person cannot rely on armed might. That is why, in China's bellicose epoch, Confucius and Mencius traveled from country to country promoting the spirit of *ren* and urging rulers to govern with humane-

ness and justice. Given the turbulent conflicts of the age, however, they ran into frustrating barriers everywhere. Nonetheless, the Confucian preferences for civil culture continued to flow in the veins of the Chinese people, who still always hope for peace and abhor war. The ancient Chinese philosophy of world peace finds concentrated expression in the term *datong*, or grand union, as found in chapter nine “Ceremonial usages,” in the *Book of Rites*:⁹

“When the Grand course was pursued, a public and common spirit ruled all under the sky; they chose men of talents, virtue, and ability; their words were sincere, and what they cultivated was harmony. Thus men did not love their parents only, nor treat as children only their own sons. A competent provision was secured for the aged till their death, employment for the able-bodied, and the means of growing up to the young. They showed kindness and compassion to widows, orphans, childless men, and those who were disabled by disease, so that they were all sufficiently maintained. Males had their proper work, and females had their homes. (They accumulated) articles (of value), disliking that they should be thrown away upon the ground, but not wishing to keep them for their own gratification. (They), laboured with their strength, disliking that it should not be exerted, but not exerting it (only) with a view to their own advantage. In this way (selfish) schemings were repressed and found no development. Robbers, filchers, and rebellious traitors did not show themselves, and hence the outer doors remained open, and were not shut. This was (the period of) what we call the Grand Union.”

The world of the Grand Union, which the Chinese people have sought, is supported by humaneness and love. In short, the perfect human personality is its standard. The ideal person (*junzi*), whose cultivation Confucius emphasized, is virtuous, manifesting humaneness and justice. Many scholars agree that Chinese culture is ethical and affords great weight to ethical relations precisely because the ideal person is its standard. The father should be kind to the child; the child should demonstrate filial piety. The older brother should kindly guide the younger brother, who should be respectful of his older brother. The husband should righteously lead the wife, who should serve her husband obediently. Society should emphasize faith and justice toward friends.

The first lines of the Confucian classic *The Great Learning* (*Daxue*) explain that knowledge should be acquired for the sake of perfecting

virtue: “The way of great learning consists in manifesting one’s bright virtue, consists in loving the people, consists in stopping in perfect goodness.”¹⁰

Confucianism teaches us to build peace and the Grand Union by starting with self-discipline and then expanding humaneness and love to the family, the nation, and the world: “The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the world, first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons.”¹¹

A Philosophy Focused on Humanity

Ikeda: In examining the realization of the Grand Union and its peaceful world, the scholar Kang Youwei (1858–1927) drew comparisons with the Buddhist Four Noble Truths: (1) all existence is suffering; (2) suffering is caused by selfish craving; (3) the eradication of selfish craving brings about the cessation of suffering and enables one to attain nirvana; (4) there is a path by which this eradication can be achieved, namely, the discipline of the Eightfold Path. Buddhism consistently aims for the realization of the ideal, not in a monastic setting, but within the world of actuality. As Kang observed, like that of the Grand Union, the philosophies of the Tiantai and Huayan schools of Buddhism are pervaded by the ideal of converting the actual world of suffering into a world of peace. In a speech delivered at the East-West Center in Hawaii,¹² I introduced Shakyamuni’s theory of peace, which is the basis of the entire Buddhist pacifist philosophy. I related the following incident illustrating how, at the deep level, Shakyamuni’s thought corresponds to the concept of the Grand Union set forth in “Ceremonial usages” in the *Book of Rites*.

Once a minister from the great Indian kingdom of Magadha told Shakyamuni of an intended invasion of the land of the Vajji. Shakyamuni asked one of his disciples seven questions about the Vajji people.

1. Do they esteem conferring and discussing?
2. Do they esteem cooperation and solidarity?
3. Do they esteem laws and traditions?
4. Do they respect the elderly?
5. Do they value women and children?
6. Do they esteem spirituality?
7. Do they esteem philosophers and people of culture and do they conduct open exchanges with other nations?

The answers to all these questions were affirmative. Hearing this, Shakyamuni said that, as long as they continued doing these things, the Vajji would probably prosper. Convinced by these so-called Seven Principles Preventing Decline, Magadha decided against invading the kingdom of the Vajji. In my view, Shakyamuni's principles agree in intention with the Chinese ideal of a world embodying the Grand Union.

Expanding on the achievements of Indian and Chinese Buddhism, Nichiren formed the essence of Japanese Buddhism and, in the philosophy found in his *Risshō Ankoku-ron* (On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land), revealed the road to world peace. The expression *Risshō* (establishing the correct teaching) means assuring the establishment of an unshakable principle and support for society by means of a philosophy of respect for life and humanity on the basis of Buddhist compassion. The "peace of the land" means a world where actions are founded on humanistic ideals and all the inhabitants can experience happiness to the full.

You have shown that the Chinese ideal world of the Grand Union is formed by the universal expansion of humaneness and love. The Confucian spirit of humaneness corresponds to the compassion taught by Buddhism. The former is the mainstay of the world of the Grand Union; the latter is the mainstay of the peaceful land resulting from the establishment of the correct teaching.

As is set forth in Nagarjuna's *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sāstra* (Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom), compassion consists of two elements providing all sentient beings with happiness and relieving all sentient beings of suffering. In Japanese the word is written with two characters *jihī* (*cibei* in Chinese), the first of which is taken to mean giving happiness and the second, removing suffering. Extending beyond the inner realm of the single individual, this idea relates to the suffering of others and promotes deliberate actions for the sake of the universally shared development. Nichiren Buddhism puts it this way: "...both oneself and others together will take joy in their possession of wisdom and compassion."¹³ In short, compassion and wisdom together represent the fundamental Buddhist spirit.

The Tiantai *Moho Zhiguan* connects Buddhist compassion and Confucian humaneness when it says that both mean pitying and caring for the lives of others and doing them no harm. The Buddhist precept against killing is a compassionate admonition to demonstrate respect for the dignity of life. Doing others no harm exemplifies a caring, loving attitude. Other Buddhist precepts or ethics develop from this point. Mahayana compassion and Confucian humaneness share this in com-

mon. While encouraging acts that connect human beings, neither can be imposed from without. Both must manifest the individual's innate spirituality and ethical sense.

Mencius' Four Beginnings reveal a profound conviction of innate human goodness. On the basis of the Lotus Sutra, Tiantai Buddhism asserts the great goodness of the Buddha nature as present in all sentient beings. "One must understand that the Buddha wisdom is inherent in all human beings."¹⁴

Thus, both Confucianism and Buddhism consistently focus on humanity itself and provide directions for manifesting and improving innate human goodness. This practical philosophy, which we call humanism, is the same as what in China is called giving precedence of consideration to the interests of the people. The spirit of connecting—not isolating and separating—human beings and always believing in their goodness and boundless possibilities animates both Confucian humaneness and Buddhist compassion. People imbued with such an attitude pursue a world of peace in which cultural development is founded on humanism as manifest in humaneness and compassion. Both of these approaches require the cultivation of practical virtue. The Chinese policy of putting the people first strives to teach people such a practical, ethical view. How does the concept of Confucian humaneness influence Chinese culture and the masses today?

Building a Society of Humane Love and Harmony

Gu: As I understand it, Buddhist compassion means loving and benefiting human beings. This accords with Confucian thought. After its introduction in the Former Han dynasty (207 BCE–9 CE), Buddhism gradually blended with Chinese culture and its cultivation of virtue. Buddhist compassion means encouraging and doing good for others while improving and enlightening oneself. *The Ekottara Āgama* (The One-up Discourses of the Buddha) teaches, "Not to do any evil, to cultivate good, to purify one's mind, this is the Teaching of the Buddhas." As you point out, the Buddhist approach corresponds to Confucian virtues of benevolence, putting humanity first, and self-discipline. Neo-Confucianism absorbs much of the spirit of Buddhism. Benevolence is the most important of social virtues. Only with love are mutual understanding, peace, reciprocal assistance, and general progress possible. Today China is truly advocating general amity and the building of a harmonious society.

The Chinese people were deeply afflicted by the violent earthquake

that struck Sichuan Province on May 12, 2008, and the violent typhoon that hit Hualian on Taiwan in 2009. In a sincere demonstration of Chinese benevolence, people from all areas of society all over the country contributed money and materiel to help the victims of both catastrophes overcome their hardship. And again, after the disastrous earthquake that struck Qinghai Province on April 14, 2010, massive support, both domestic and foreign, was offered to aid relief and reconstruction.

Combatting Inhuman Violence

Ikeda: The sufferers have my sincerest sympathy. I pray for the repose of the dead and earnestly hope for the speediest possible recovery of the afflicted regions. Natural disasters, like the earthquakes that struck Haiti and Chile in 2010, the Kobe-Awaji and Chu-etsu earthquakes that hit Japan in recent years, and yearly typhoons teach us the importance of mutual protection and support. Volunteer and regional disaster-prevention activities yearly become better established to deal with such situations. Fulfilling their mission as Buddhists, young SGI members energetically and enthusiastically give assistance wherever it is needed.

In this connection too, Buddhism and Confucianism are a mine of wisdom for improving human nature and promoting social cooperation and harmony. Without humaneness and compassion the most advanced society is degenerate.

Your own *The Cultural Foundation of Chinese Education* states that human beings create culture and that, in the sense that we develop within our cultural contexts, culture creates human beings. It is essential therefore that we take the humanistic spirit into serious consideration in cultural creation. Otherwise, what we produce will not be true culture but only a kind of culture-like rubbish or scum.

When they set out to domineer violently over others, some cultures fail to live up to the humane elegance implicit in the term culture itself. Surely war is a product of rubbish culture of this kind. Cultures of war and discrimination are actually barbarism behind a cultural mask and represent the defeat of human nature. A war culture spawning hatred and violence of the kind that characterized the twentieth century can certainly be called cultural scum. The biggest task—the mission—remaining for us in the twenty-first century is transforming the war culture that clouded the twentieth century into a culture of peace. What must we do to eliminate the venom of war from the world? What is the role that humanism must perform in the world of today?

Toward the Age of Human Self-awakening

Gu: Exactly as you say, the twentieth was a century of violence. In his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel P. Huntington explained, “In this new world the most pervasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will not be between social classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities.”¹⁵ Actually, he was seeing only the surface phenomena of the clashes occurring in the world today. Civilization cannot be isolated from economics. Throughout history, the world’s diverse profit groups and cultural entities have built civilizations on a foundation of economic development. Evolved over a long period on the basis of blood relations and communal economic and political activities, ethnic groups have included subgroups working together for profit. The clashes Huntington says occur between civilizations mask conflicting profit interests. At present, clashes may occur within as well as between cultural entities. For hundreds of years Europe witnessed repeated wars within the same cultural sphere and even among cultural siblings. The fact that both of the two World Wars took place within Western civilization also refutes Huntington’s view.

On one point, however, he is correct. He is right to say that, instead of a single global culture, the world of the future will witness the coexistence of many different cultures and civilizations. This is why he tries to make people cautious of the danger of clashing civilizations and promotes inter-civilization dialogue.

As you say, an element of extreme danger for humanity is inherent in culture. The culture of war bred by hatred and violence is indeed cultural dregs, and not the kind of culture humanity should have. Both technological development and abundant material production have two aspects. On the one hand, they enrich material life. On the other, they stimulate human voracity. In addition, they find application in the production of armament to be used in mutual slaughter.

We are entering a time in which humanity must become self-awakened. If we all can propagate Confucian benevolence and Buddhist compassion, we will become aware of the peril of war and generate the hope of world peace. This indeed is the kind of humanism you speak of.

Here I return to the extraordinarily important topic of education. As education, both Confucianism and Buddhism encourage goodness. Our educating must never teach hatred. Instead, it must cultivate in the younger generations mutual understanding, shared learning, altruistic helpfulness, and planning for peaceful coexistence.

Respect for the Dignity of Life—the Coordinate Axis of Everything

Ikeda: I am completely in accord with what you say. When you refer to the importance of the humanistic spirit of culture you establish the dignity of life and humanity as universal coordinates. You thus raise a paean to the triumph of human nature and the ceaseless struggle against inner barbarity. Ultimately, it is human beings who create culture and civilization. For this reason, if we found our thoughts and deeds on a humanistic education that strives for boundless goodness, we can create truly rich cultures and civilizations transcending ethnic and philosophical differences and generating a shared, diverse wisdom. In the next chapter, I want to discuss educational theories in greater detail.

Notes

¹ Translated by A. Charles Muller/Resources for East Asian Language and Thought <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/docofmean.html>

² Arnold J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 9–10.

³ *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. II (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2006), p. 946.

⁴ *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. I (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), p. 33.

⁵ Isaiah Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*, edited by Henry Hardy (London: John Murray, 1990).

⁶ Translated from the Japanese-language homepage of Waseda University.

⁷ *The Analects of Confucius*: 1. 12.

⁸ *Conversations with Goethe with Eckermann and Soret*, Vol. II, translated from the German by John Oxenford in two volumes (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 65, Cornhill, 1850), p. 259.

⁹ Translated by James Legge, <http://ctext.org/liji/li-yum>

¹⁰ Translated by A. Charles Muller/Resources for East Asian Language and Thought <http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/greatlearning.html>

¹¹ Translated by James Legge, <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/c/confucius/c748g/>

¹² “Peace and Human Security: A Buddhist Perspective for the 21st Century,” 1995.

¹³ *The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings*, translated by Burton Watson (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2004), p. 146.

¹⁴ *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, Vol. I (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), p. 363.

¹⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

Daisaku Ikeda

Recipient of 312 (as of August 10, 2011) honorary doctorates and professorships from the world's academic institutions, Dr. Ikeda was born in Tokyo in 1928. He has founded a range of educational institutions from kindergartens to universities with post graduate facilities located around the world, starting with the establishment of Soka University in Tokyo, which opened to undergraduate students in 1971. Other cultural institutions founded by Dr. Ikeda include the Min-On Concert Association and the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum. Academic and peace research institutions founded by Dr. Ikeda are the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research (Tokyo/Honolulu), Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue (Cambridge, MA), and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (Tokyo). Dr. Ikeda is the author of books on Buddhist philosophy, stories for children and a novelized history of Soka Gakkai (*The Human Revolution, The New Human Revolution*), and is co-author of a series of dialogues, including *Choose Life*, his discussion with the historian Arnold J. Toynbee. His interest in China dates from 1968, when he publicly called for restoration of Sino-Japanese relations. Since normalization of bilateral ties in 1972, he has visited the People's Republic of China ten times, including a meeting with the late Premier Zhou Enlai.

Gu Mingyuan

Now president of the Chinese Society of Education and Honorary Dean of the College of Education Administration (Beijing Normal University), Gu Mingyuan was born in 1929 in Jiangyin, Jiangsu Province. He studied in Beijing and Moscow, served as a professor, directed the International and Comparative Education Research Institute, and became vice president of Beijing Normal University. He has played a major role in promoting education in China. Having served as president of the China Education Association for International Exchange and president of the Chinese Comparative Education Society as well as vice president of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies, he is an honored figure on the world educational stage as well. China awarded him the title National Distinguished Teacher in 1991, and Beijing named him a People's Teacher in 1999. Hong Kong recognized him with an honorary doctorate of education in 2001 from the Hong Kong Institute of Education, and Teachers College of Columbia University awarded him their Honorary Professor Medal in 2008. He has edited several encyclopedias and professional journals, including *Comparative Education Review*. Professor Gu is the author of *Education in China and Abroad: Perspectives from a Lifetime in Comparative Education* (translated and published in English) and other books in his field.

Feature: A New Humanism for World Peace

From Two Symposiums

The following are selections from two symposiums sponsored by the Institute of Oriental Philosophy(IOP) in 2010 and 2011.

The first symposium was in India. It was held to commemorate the 50th anniversary since the founder, Soka Gakkai International President Ikeda, conceived the idea of the Institute of Oriental Philosophy during his visit to Buddha Gaya, India in February, 1961 (The symposium was held on February 6, 2011 at the Soka Bodhi Tree Garden, located on the outskirts of New Delhi). The theme of the symposium was “A New Humanism for World Peace.” It served as a reflection on SGI President Ikeda’s address, “A New Humanism for the Coming Century,” which he delivered when he was invited to the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies in October, 1997.

The second symposium was titled “Modern Civilization and Philosophy.” It was co-sponsored by the Brazilian Academy of Philosophy (Academia Brasileira de Filosofia) and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (held on December 1 and 2, 2010 at the Academy in Rio de Janeiro). This academy is the first of its kind to be founded in Latin America. There are 60 official members, as well as corresponding members from outside Brazil such as the late Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques Derrida, and a number of other leading intellectuals from around the world. President Ikeda, who has received an honorary degree from the Academy, is the first Japanese member.

During the symposium, Academy President João Ricardo Moderno and former Minister of Culture Paulo Sérgio Rouanet greeted the attendants. The symposium was followed by three sessions of reports given by representatives from both Brazil and Japan: “A Vision of the Cosmos, Nature, and the Environment,” “A Vision of Life and Human Rights,” and “Women in Modern Civilization.”

On December 3, IOP and the Brazilian Academy of Philosophy co-organized at the Academy the first showing in North and South America of an exhibition “Lotus Sutra: A Message of Peace and Harmonious Coexistence.” On display were Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series edited by IOP and exhibit panels tracing the history and teachings of the Lotus Sutra.