

## Sawaki Kōdō, Zen and Wartime Japan: Final Pieces of the Puzzle 沢木興道、禅宗、そして戦時下日本 パズルの最後のピース

**Brian Victoria**

An earlier article posted at The Asia-Pacific Journal entitled “Zen Masters on the Battlefield” (available [here](#)) sparked a heated online debate extending over a series of articles concerning the wartime role of Sōtō Zen Master Sawaki Kōdō (1880-1965).

me as I seek to “take readers behind the scenes” to recreate the wartime past of Zen master Sawaki Kōdō. Inasmuch as Sawaki’s war-related statements are already known, the primary focus of this article is a recreation of Sawaki’s wartime activities as the final pieces of a puzzle leading to a comprehensive understanding of this well-known master’s wartime record.

### Part I

Getting behind the scenes in Japan’s war years is not an easy task, for writings in the Zen tradition about a particular Zen master, past or present, are nearly all works of hagiography, i.e., especially those written by someone in that Zen master’s Dharma lineage. This is because disciples invariably seek to present their predecessors in the best possible light, allowing them to bathe in their master’s “reflected glory” while establishing their own credentials as bona fide Zen masters. Equally important, such unconditional praise is in accord with the Confucian moral dictum, long incorporated into Zen, that one’s master must never be publicly criticized.

Another major difficulty is similar to one experienced in Germany following the Nazi’s defeat, i.e., few Germans were willing to admit they had once staunchly supported Adolf Hitler. Many Postwar Germans went to great lengths to hide their wartime complicity. Similarly, in postwar Japan few have been willing to admit they once supported Japanese aggression directed against the peoples of Asia. Even today, some Japanese political leaders dismiss the very idea of any Japanese wrongdoing. The



**Sawaki as a priest**

Interested readers will find the relevant articles, including both sides of the debate, [here](#) and [here](#).

In light of this debate, I invite readers to join

current attempts by the Japanese government to disavow the role of the Japanese military in organizing wartime sexual slavery (aka “comfort women”) are but the latest example.

Ironically, this unwillingness to admit culpability spills over, in the case of Zen, even to the Western Dharma descendants of wartime Zen masters. If their master (or master’s master) was a fervent advocate of war and the mass killing it entails, what does this say about the master’s alleged “enlightenment” (or their own)? Facing a situation, how does one go about reconstructing a past that no one wishes to have reconstructed or be reminded of?

The first step is, of course, to look for the wartime writings of the master or masters in question. Fortunately, many of their comments are still extant in the publications of their respective Zen institutions, whether Sōtō or Rinzai. The second step is to look for the writings of these masters that were published in newspapers, books or other wartime Buddhist periodicals, including secular publications.

### Sawaki’s Statements

In attempting to reconstruct Sawaki’s wartime record, there is, as evidenced in previous articles, ample proof of his efforts to employ the Buddha-dharma in support of the Japanese war effort.<sup>1</sup> For this article, two short examples will suffice:

Religion exists in the renunciation of all forms of desire. This is where the way is to be found. This is where enlightenment is encountered. . . .

Expressed in terms of our Japanese military, it denotes a realm in which wherever the flag of our military goes there is no ordeal too great to endure, nor enemy

numbers too numerous [to overcome]. I call this invoking the power of the military flag. Discarding one’s body beneath the military flag is true selflessness.<sup>2</sup> (Emphasis mine)

In a similar vein:

Zen master Dōgen said that we should discard our self. He taught that we should quietly engage in practice having forgotten our self. Dōgen expressed this in the chapter entitled “Life and Death” of the Shōbōgenzō [A Treasury of the Essence of the True Dharma] as follows: “Simply discard body and mind and cast yourself into the realm of the Buddha. The Buddha will then serve as your guide, and if you follow the guidance given, you will free yourself from life and death, and become a Buddha, without any need to exert yourself either physically or mentally.”

Expressed in different words, this means that the orders of one’s superiors are to be obeyed, regardless of content. It is in doing this that you immediately become faithful retainers of the emperor and perfect soldiers. If you die you will be worshipped as a god in [Shintō] Yasukuni shrine.<sup>3</sup> (Emphasis mine)

Needless to say, “true selflessness” in Buddhism does not consist in “discarding one’s body beneath the military flag” any more than becoming “perfect soldiers” is a teaching of Zen Master Dōgen. Something similar of course

can be said concerning the support that all of the world’s major religions give to the wars fought by the nations they are a part of.

### Sawaki’s Wartime Actions

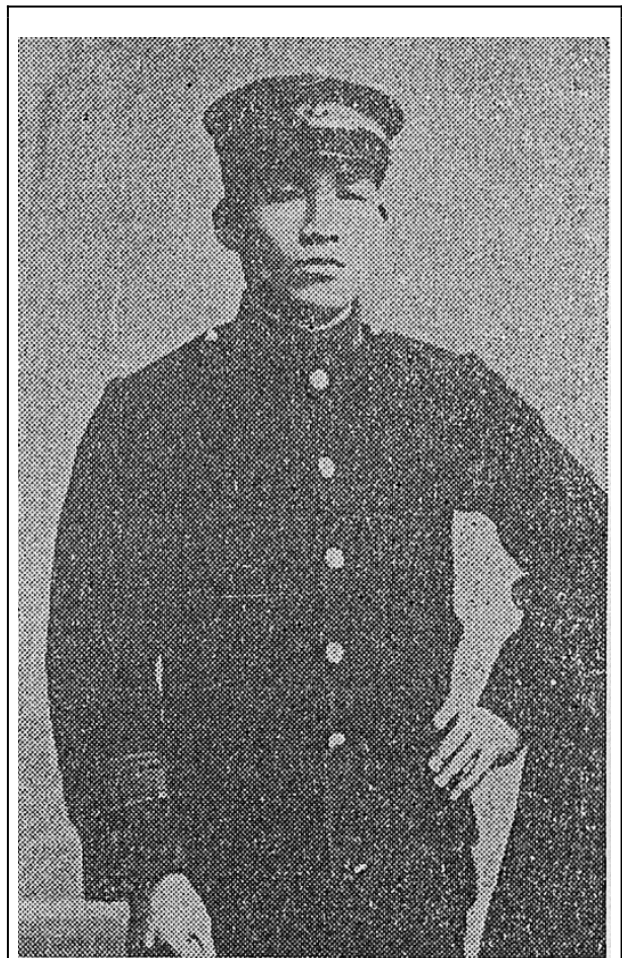
While it may be possible to debate the meaning of some of Sawaki’s more obscure wartime statements, the meaning of the two quotations above is clear. However, a more controversial question remains, i.e., did Sawaki’s wartime actions match the Buddhist rhetoric he used to endorse Japan’s aggression? About this there is more room for debate.

The major reason this question is more debatable is because the evidence is less clear. For example, to the best of my knowledge, Sawaki, unlike D.T. Suzuki, left no diaries behind detailing his wartime actions or motivations. We must therefore rely on reports by those who were close to Sawaki, i.e., his disciples, the authors of his hagiographies. Needless to say, they are highly unlikely to write anything that is unambiguously negative about him. Thus, when references are made to Sawaki’s wartime teachings or actions, they deserve close attention, not just regarding the content of the references but, equally important, the way these references fit into the larger context of a country in the midst of what Japanese leaders accurately described as “all-out war” (zenmen sensō).

Further, in seeking to understand Sawaki’s thought it is critically important to compare and contrast it with that of his peers. Sawaki’s wartime statements must be compared with those of other Zen masters of his time to ascertain what they held in common and what, if anything, separated them. Doing this enables us to determine if Sawaki was alone in his pro-war statements, and especially to determine if Sawaki was in any sense unique in using Buddhist teachings as the basis for his support of Japan’s war policies.

We find that Sawaki was but one in a long list

of both Rinzai and Sōtō Zen leaders who spoke similarly. Sawaki’s uniqueness among his peers was that, as a young Zen priest, he had demonstrated his willingness, as a soldier, to kill (and be killed) on behalf of Japanese colonial expansion in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. He subsequently actively encouraged others to do likewise. It was precisely this willingness that enabled Sawaki to have such a powerful wartime impact during the Asia-Pacific War of 1937-45.



**Sawaki as a soldier**

Especially in wartime, the political orientation of one’s friends, even acquaintances, provides additional information about the nature of the person under discussion. If Sawaki had associated with those few antiwar Buddhists of

his day, we would come away with a much different impression of him than if, as we shall see, he consistently associated with some of Japan's most prominent rightwing civilian and military leaders.

In short, establishing context is a key ingredient of the academic enterprise. The more contextual evidence presented, coupled with hard facts, the greater level of confidence we can have in conclusions reached. In Sawaki's case we have already noted the manner in which he broke his priestly vow not to kill during the Russo-Japanese War. Thus, there is no need to repeat that evidence here. Instead, let us first closely examine a second trip Sawaki made to China years later, beginning in March 1934 and extending through August.

Before doing this, however, it is important to examine what appears at first glance to be a reasonable suspicion regarding information concerning Sawaki. In the first instance, this suspicion has to do with the difference between books written about Sawaki by his disciples versus those writings that bear Sawaki's name as their author. In Sawaki's case, however, this difference is minimal, for none of the writings, attributed directly to Sawaki or simply quoting him, was actually written by him. In other words, all of his writings, whether carrying his name or not, were written by his disciples, not himself. As Sawaki's longtime disciple, Sakai Tokugen, notes, "There is not a single one of Sawaki's writings that he wrote himself. All of them were written stenographically."<sup>4</sup>

There may be at least two reasons for this. First, as an impoverished youth, Sawaki received only a primary school education. Thus, it is possible he found it tedious to write employing the complicated Chinese characters comprising the Buddhist lexicon. Sawaki was, however, recognized for his wide knowledge of the Zen canon. Thus, a more likely explanation is the long tradition in Zen, first practiced in

China, in which the disciples of Chan (J. Zen) masters wrote down their master's words and published them as if their master had written them. This is not to suggest that Sawaki did not, or could not, have carefully checked his disciples' work exactly as his disciples claimed he did.

### **Sawaki's Second Trip to China**

Bearing this in mind, Sakai Tokugen began his description of Sawaki's four-month China visit (March through August 1934) by quoting Sawaki as follows:

Inasmuch as I had previously been close to Lt. General Yanagawa Heisuke, he made the following proposition to me, "Why don't you come to China to worship at the various temples there?" [I replied] "I wouldn't be able to serve as a military spy, you know." "Aha, ha, ha! It's not something like that at all. It would be fine if you would just come to worship."<sup>5</sup>

On the surface this doesn't seem to be a particularly revealing conversation, let alone a sinister one. Yet things begin to look different when one examines the contents more closely. For starters, it is interesting to note that Sawaki, a former enlisted soldier, identifies himself as a close friend of an Imperial Army general. What was the origin of their friendship? And who was General Yanagawa?



**General Yanagawa Heisuke**

Lt. General Yanagawa Heisuke [1879-1945] was one of the senior members of the “Imperial Way faction” in the Imperial Army. The domestic aim of these ultra-rightwing nationalists was the complete eradication of the remaining elements of Japanese democracy; the adoption of national socialist economic policies similar to the Nazis; and the restoration of full political power to Emperor Hirohito. As for foreign policy, they fully supported the expansion of the Japanese colonial empire, yet believed the Soviet Union was Japan’s principal enemy due to its promotion of communism.<sup>6</sup>

In order to achieve their goals, encapsulated in the call for a “Shōwa Restoration,” younger faction members committed numerous

domestic assassinations of opposing political, business and military leaders in the early 1930s. These assassinations succeeded in bringing a halt to Japanese cabinets based on political parties following the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi in May 1932. Because of the emphasis this faction placed on “spiritual training” ( seishin kyōiku ), both Sōtō and Rinzai Zen masters trained many of the officers and civilians associated with it and even defended their domestic acts of terrorism in their writings and in the courtroom.

Although still a few years in the future in 1934, during the Nanking Massacre of December 1937 General Yanagawa served as commander of the Yanagawa Imperial Army Corps. Soldiers in the units comprising this corps subsequently testified to having committed some of most heinous atrocities perpetrated against the residents of Nanjing, especially against Chinese women, extending over many days and weeks.

In 1948 the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal executed General Matsui Iwane for his role as supreme commander during the Nanking Massacre. Shortly before his death, Matsui described the attitude of his subordinate officers, including Yanagawa, as follows:

Prince Asaka was there [at the Staff Officers Meeting] as well as theater commander General Yanagawa. I told them that the enhancement of imperial prestige we had accomplished had all been debased in a single stroke by the riotous conduct of the troops. Nevertheless, after I finished speaking they all laughed at me.<sup>7</sup>

Be that as it may, a second question raised by the previous quotation concerns Sawaki’s unwillingness to spy for the Imperial Army. Yet, what would have prompted Sawaki to suspect this in the first place?

The answer is that in the aftermath of WW I, the Imperial military, both the Army and Navy, were well known for employing real as well as fake Buddhist priests to spy for them in China. These spies had been particularly effective when Japan attacked Germany's colonial enclave in Qingdao. It was a combination of a real Buddhist priest-spy on behalf of the Navy, and a fake Buddhist priest-spy from the Army, whose robes gained them entry to that closely guarded enclave. They told the German border guards they had come to conduct memorial services in the colony's small, but strategically located, Japanese Buddhist cemetery. In reality they had both been sent to draw detailed diagrams of German fortifications on behalf of their military patrons.

Given Sawaki's military background, he would have been well aware of the Imperial military's use of Buddhist priests as spies, and it is to Sawaki's credit that he indicated his unwillingness to be used in this manner. Yet, why would Yanagawa have issued his invitation, an invitation that according to Japanese custom meant he would arrange payment for Sawaki's trip?

A likely answer lies in a further description of Sawaki's lengthy trip. First we learn that it was the Japanese consulates in Shanghai and other Chinese cities that made all of Sawaki's travel arrangements including providing an interpreter.<sup>8</sup> Further, in Nanjing, the Japanese consulate provided him with lodging in the consulate itself.<sup>9</sup> But why would both the Imperial Army and the Japanese government have been so solicitous towards Sawaki?

One possible reason is contained within the following sentence in the narrative: "My visit came after the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident. The feelings of ordinary Chinese toward Japan had worsened."<sup>10</sup>

There was, in fact, more than ample reason for ordinary Chinese to be filled with hostility toward Japan. Following a fake "anti-Japanese"

incident carried out in secret by a group of Imperial Army officers in September 1931, the Japanese military had occupied all of northeastern China, i.e., Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Following this, the Japanese government established the puppet state of Manchukuo in March 1932. In the aftermath, the question for the Japanese military and government became one of how to mollify Chinese anger toward Japan.

One policy adopted by the Japanese government and military in response was to stress the importance of the religion, i.e., Buddhism, which both peoples shared. Who better to remind the Chinese people of their shared religious heritage than an ideologically trustworthy Japanese Buddhist priest like Sawaki? In fulfilling this role there was no need for him to act as a spy. His extended travel throughout China, including Japanese-controlled Manchuria, would be sufficient.

In this connection it should be noted that the Japanese government also paid for D.T. Suzuki to travel to China to meet influential Buddhist leaders over a forty-day period beginning in May of the same year. It is for good reason that Suzuki's admirers claim he visited China "in a semi-diplomatic capacity" but provide no hint of what "semi-diplomatic" activities he was involved in.<sup>11</sup> I suggest that both men likely played similar roles in the Japanese government's efforts to secure the acquiescence of Chinese Buddhist leaders to the Japanese occupation of one part of their country.

Another noteworthy aspect of Sakai's book is its abrupt end, i.e., a short six pages after Sawaki's return from China in August 1934. Thus, there is no description of Sawaki's actions during the subsequent full-scale invasion of the remainder of China beginning in July 1937 and through Japan's defeat in August 1945. Nor is there any discussion of Sawaki's postwar life despite the fact that he lived until

December 1965, dying at the age of 85. There was, however, one notable exception to Sakai's silence about both Sawaki's wartime and postwar life.

### **A Brief Chronology of Sawaki's life,**

The exception consisted of an appendix including a chronology of Sawaki's life listing major events that occurred before, during and after the war.<sup>12</sup> Here we focus on the wartime era. Although brief, there is much to learn from this chronology.

Sawaki made two additional visits to Manchuria during the war years. The first was in May of 1941 and the second was in May of the following year. Significantly, the chronology notes that in both years he received invitations from two major Japanese companies operating in Manchuria, i.e., Kokusai Unyu (International Transport) in the first instance and, a year later, Manshū Dengyō (Manchuria Electric Industry).

Manshū Dengyō was headquartered in Tokyo and enjoyed monopoly control over all electrical generation in Manchuria. Kokusai Unyu was a large transportation company directly connected to the military in that it transported both soldiers and their equipment. Both companies had numerous branches throughout Manchuria where Sawaki would have lectured. Yet, why would either company pay a Buddhist priest to come to Manchuria?

On the one hand, this question cannot be precisely answered in the absence of written records of Sawaki's presentations during his visits. Yet, it can be said with confidence that his presence was deemed sufficiently valuable to the war effort that he received multiple invitations.

However, when the question of Sawaki's Manchurian presentations is framed differently, we come up with a much more likely answer. That is to say, thanks to his wartime writings as

noted above, we know the pro-war message Sawaki delivered in Japan proper. This message would surely have resonated with Japanese employees stationed in Manchuria.

As a decorated, and seriously wounded, Imperial Army veteran from the Russo-Japanese war, Sawaki would have enjoyed instant credibility and respect from his audiences, especially as he had earlier helped defeat a major Western power just as Japan was, after December 7, 1941, seeking to do once again. Furthermore, Sawaki was appropriately modest about his accomplishments: "It was just a question of being in the right place at the right time - a time when a lot of killing was going on. I was lucky - that's all."<sup>13</sup>

Sawaki, however, had a more important message to convey to his audiences in his capacity as a Zen priest. As noted in a previous article, he criticized his past performance on the battlefield for having been marred by bravado and a desire to be recognized, if only in death, for his bravery in battle. In other words, from a Buddhist point of view, his service had been marred by self-attachment. As noted above, in the following years Sawaki came to recognize what true selflessness consisted of, i.e., "Discarding one's body beneath the military flag is true selflessness." Additionally, "It is in doing this that you immediately become faithful retainers of the emperor and perfect soldiers."

If talking about becoming "perfect soldiers" to civilians, i.e., company employees, seems incongruous, it is important to note that those Buddhist priests like Sawaki who were too old to become soldiers during the Asia-Pacific War were strongly encouraged to provide morale-building lectures to Japanese company employees and factory workers. As stated in a call from the multi-sect "Great Japan Buddhist Federation," (Dainihon Bukkyō-kai) priests were "expected to provide spiritual training and guidance to the industrial warriors" (

sangyō senshi ).<sup>14</sup> In the midst of a losing war it was ever more critical to instill in civilian employees the same spirit of self-sacrifice unto death as the battlefield soldier. In the accomplishment of this task it is hard to conceive of anyone better qualified than Sawaki.

**A Final Note of Interest**

There is one final note of interest in Sakai’s chronology, namely, in March 1945 Sawaki moved to the residence of Maruyama Tsurukichi. The reference, however, neither explains what caused Sawaki to move or who Maruyama was. March 1945 marked the beginning of the firebombing of Tokyo by B-29 bombers that destroyed the heart of the city and took more than 100,000 lives, so this may have forced Sawaki to move. But who was the man who took him in?



**Maruyama Tsurukichi**

Briefly, Maruyama Tsurukichi (1883-1956) had risen through police ranks to serve as the head of the “Special Higher Police” (Tokubetsu Kōtō Keisatsu), the Japanese equivalent of the Nazi Gestapo, in Kagawa Prefecture and later the head of the colonial police force in Korea. This was at the time of the Korean independence movement of 1919. According to research conducted by Park Eunsik, the bloody combination of military and police suppression that followed resulted in 7,509 people killed, 15,849 wounded, and 46,303 arrested.<sup>15</sup>

Maruyama returned to Japan in 1924, this time taking charge of suppressing leftwing activities at home, especially labor unions and strikes. Maruyama continued to rise through the ranks until by 1945 he was tasked with mobilizing the entire northeastern area of Japan in preparation for the expected Allied invasion. Following the war, Maruyama was initially banished from holding public office by the Allied Occupation Forces. However, in 1951 he assumed the presidency of Musashino Bijutsu Gakkō (Musashino Art School). Be that as it may, the question remains as to why had Maruyama had taken Sawaki in?

It is reasonable to assume that it had some connection to three additional entries in Sakai’s chronology. First, from December 23, 1939 onwards, Sawaki served on a government commission charged with promoting the martial arts among Japanese school children as part of their preparation for military service. Second, on November 22, 1941 Sawaki was appointed to serve on a government commission devoted to enhancing the physical strength of all citizens. These and related contributions led the Japanese government’s Bureau of Decorations to award a “Medal of Honor” in the form of a silver cup to Sawaki for “promoting the public interest” on November 3, 1943.

**Interim Conclusion**

It is in the nature of the work of the religious



historian to develop logical hypotheses based on available information while simultaneously remaining prepared to modify or even reject these hypotheses when confronted with additional information. The process of ongoing discovery makes the religious historian's work both interesting and challenging.

In Sawaki's case it is clear I have reached some tentative hypotheses about the nature of his wartime activities based on solid if incomplete information.

At this point, Sawaki's wartime actions, like his words, appear to be entirely congruent with those of a strong if not fervent supporter of Japan's military aggression. The only information we have to the contrary is that he declined, if only half in jest, to become a spy for the Imperial Army. Yet, like D.T. Suzuki, he accepted the largesse of the Japanese government in undertaking a four-month trip through China at a time when China-Japan relations were severely strained.

Nevertheless, I have yet to prove my hypotheses concerning the nature of Sawaki's wartime activities. I have merely provided an introduction to those activities coupled with a plausible explanation of their significance. There is, however, additional information concerning Sawaki's wartime activities.

## Part II

The focus of Part II is on Sawaki's wartime activities as presented in the writings of yet another of his disciples, a layman named Tanaka Tadao. Tanaka wrote a two-volume tribute to Sawaki entitled: "Sawaki Kōdō - Kono Koshin no Hito (Sawaki Kōdō - Heart of an Ancient Man).<sup>16</sup> Tanaka was a respected member of Sawaki's long-time disciples. He was so respected that Sakai invited him to write a preface to his own book on Sawaki, the only one of Sawaki's disciples so honored.

Tanaka's book consists of two volumes, totaling

946 pages, indicates that it contains a much more detailed picture of Sawaki than the 283 pages of Sakai's book. However, references to Sawaki's activities during the Asia-Pacific War are contained almost entirely in the second volume.

In his preface Tanaka notes that he wrote his biography based on his own recollections as well as the recollections of others who knew Sawaki well. Tanaka attended several gatherings of those who knew Sawaki where he recorded their reminiscences with his tape recorder. He frequently includes these reminiscences in his book, placing quotation signs around the recorded material. However, he seldom identifies who or where something was said, making it difficult for the scholar to unravel events.

### Tanaka Tadao's Political Background

Before examining the war-related content of Tanaka's two volumes, it is important to examine Tanaka's political orientation, for it clearly has an impact on his view of Sawaki. As Tanaka explains (p. 159),<sup>17</sup> he had been imprisoned from 1937-39 under suspicion of being a member of the leftwing popular front movement. However, while in prison he underwent a process known as *tenkō*, i.e., coerced ideological conversion in which prisoners rejected their previous leftwing views and pledged loyalty to the emperor and state. In postwar Japan he went on to become a major ultra-nationalist. To give but one example of his later political views, consider Tanaka's eulogy offered at the time of the suicide of the famous postwar ultra-nationalist novelist and actor, Mishima Yukio.



**Mishima Yukio**

On November 25, 1970, Mishima, accompanied by four members of his private army, addressed soldiers of Japan's Self-Defense Forces in Tokyo, urging them to rise up, launch a coup d'état, and restore political power to the emperor. The assembled soldiers, however, only laughed at Mishima's call to arms. Deeply disappointed, Mishima committed traditional ritual suicide by disemboweling himself, i.e., seppuku .

For Tanaka, Mishima's call for a military uprising was of no concern. He wrote:

Mishima has carried out the wishes of our ancestors by never ceasing to pray for the defense of the sacred nature of the emperor. . . . Since Mishima's death, there has been a continual increase in the influence of Japan's communist forces together with an increase within conservative political parties of the influence of those cultivating a humanistic,

ambiguous awareness of national identity. It is necessary for those who uphold the lofty ideal of love of country to unceasingly cling to Mishima's spirit.<sup>18</sup>

It is through this ultra-nationalist prism that Tanaka's view of Sasaki's wartime record needs to be assessed.

#### Tanaka on Sawaki

The first thing to note is that Tanaka is very much aware of the need to address both the war itself as well as Sawaki's relationship to it. We see this as early as the second page of the preface to his book. Addressing his Japanese readers, Tanaka writes:

Impertinent Japanese intellectuals claim that it was reckless to fight a war with an enemy like the United States when it was clear to all that Japan would lose. These unrepentant, idle spectators state that Japan's defeat was only to be expected. That is to say, these impertinent intellectuals treat the Japanese people with contempt. They have gone in a worthless direction, masochistically and meekly echoing the viewpoint that severely criticizes the Japanese people as criminals on a worldwide-scale.

Tanaka then contrasts Sawaki with these masochistic intellectuals: "The entire body and mind of [our] master was brimming with a spirited bravery."

Tanaka identifies one of the impertinent intellectuals (p. 459). In a section entitled, "Rats, Too, Form an Unbroken Line" (i.e., in a fashion similar to the Imperial family), Tanaka

introduces Professor Ichikawa Hakugen who taught at Rinzaï Zen sect-affiliated Hanazono University in Kyoto.

Ichikawa was certainly an intellectual, but he was also a Rinzaï Zen priest. What distinguished Ichikawa from his peers was that in 1970 he had written a book entitled *The War Responsibility of Buddhists* ( *Bukkyō-sha no Sensō-sekinin* ). In 1975 he wrote a companion book, *Japanese Religion under Fascism* ( *Nihon Fashizumu ka no Shūkyō* ). In his first book Ichikawa both admitted and repented his own wartime support of Japanese aggression. However, for the first time in postwar Japan, he also identified those many, many other Zen figures, including both Sawaki and D.T. Suzuki, who had said and written similar things during the war.

Tanaka could not abide Ichikawa for having criticized Sawaki, in particular, Sawaki's admonition to "Invoke the Power of the Military Banner" ( *Nenpi Gunki-riki* ) instead of the traditional Mahāyāna invocation: "Invoke the Power of Kannon (Skt., *Avalokiteśvara*)" ( *Nenpi Kannon-riki* ). Tanaka rebuked Ichikawa as follows:

Professor Ichikawa Hakugen of Hanazono University has ridiculed and made fun of Sawaki Kōdō for his "Invoke the Power of the Military Banner," asking if this is all that a famous Zen master is capable of. Ichikawa heaped abuse on him implying this was some kind of strange superstition. Since Ichikawa wrote this in his book there is no doubt that he meant it seriously.

However, if it is appropriate to call this a superstition, then the Kannon Sutra itself must be a superstition as well. The Kannon Sutra . . . states that when an

unlimited number of sentient beings, facing various forms of distress, wholeheartedly call on the name of Kannon Bodhisattva, then Kannon will graciously and immediately deliver them from their distress. For example, even if someone is thrown into a great fire, they will remain unburned. Further, if someone attacks intending to kill you, if you but call on the name of this Bodhisattva then the attacker's sword will break into little pieces. There are many other examples from this sutra that could be given, but aren't they all examples of superstition?

Hey professor, how do you explain this superstitious writing?

Note that Tanaka does not deny that Sawaki wrote the admonition calling on soldiers to invoke the power of the military banner during the war years. Instead he takes Ichikawa to task for the criticism of Sawaki. Namely, if invoking the power of the Imperial military's banner is superstitious then so must be the invoking of Kannon's power. In Tanaka's mind there was no difference between the two.

### **Was Sawaki a Militarist?**

Just how deeply concerned Tanaka was with Sawaki's wartime reputation is further demonstrated by a section in Chapter Eleven entitled, appropriately, "Was [Sawaki] Complicit in Japanese Militarism?" Tanaka acknowledges (p. 357) that Ichikawa was not the only one to have criticized Sawaki's wartime conduct:

There are those whom Nietzsche has described as shallow minded, i.e., frivolous, who attached such

things as a label of militarism [to Sawaki] or claimed that he severed his relationship with Zen Buddhism or opportunistically went along with the times. However, as previously noted, the wartime actions of Sawaki Kōdō show no traces of his having been cut off from the Buddha-dharma or simply going along with the times. Instead he went straight ahead, looking neither to the left nor right, constantly at one with the Buddha-dharma.

On the one hand, in light of Tanaka's political orientation, it is not surprising to find him dismissing Sawaki's critics as he does. Yet, on the same page Tanaka does level the following criticism against what he calls "Japanese religion":

Japanese religion, especially Buddhism, has never been the driving force behind conflicts with other nations. However, up to the present time, it has failed to exert itself to transcend such conflicts. Therefore, when war comes and the people rise up to fight as a matter of life and death [Japanese religion/Buddhism] ends up cooperating with the war-making capacity of its own country.

This is, I think, a rather strong criticism. Whether Tanaka's criticism was, if only obliquely, meant to apply to Sawaki as well, is up to the reader to decide. In any event, Tanaka does not attempt to defend Sawaki by claiming that critics missed the subtlety of his master's thought or that he was opposed to either war in general or the Asia-Pacific War in particular.

### Another missed opportunity

With more than 900 pages in two volumes, one might think that Tanaka would have seized the opportunity to respond to Sawaki's "shallow-minded" critics by setting the record straight on his master's wartime stance, both in word and deed. Yet, the title of Chapter Eleven makes it clear this is a false hope, namely: "Immediately Before the Great War and Immediately After It." As with Sakai's book, the war years draw yet another yawning blank. In short, two of Sawaki's most ardent defenders both sidestep his record during the war years.

Nevertheless, when read closely, Tanaka includes bits and pieces of information that address aspects of Sawaki's wartime actions albeit not his wartime writings. First of all, he confirms what we already know and adds to patterns of conduct first described by Sakai. For example, Tanaka introduces Sakai's description of Sawaki's wartime Dharma talks (p. 455) given at the lay-oriented Zen training center attached to Daichūji temple:

In Sawaki's lectures on Zen Master Dōgen's writings, you will find such phrases as "the eight corners of the world under one roof" and "the way of the gods" scattered throughout. At that time we all truly believed in such things as "one hundred million [citizens] of one mind" and "self-annihilation for the sake of one's country." We were consumed with the thought of repaying the debt of gratitude we owed the state, and we incessantly feared for the destiny our nation.

The importance of the above quotation is that it confirms Sawaki's incorporation of the most imperialistic and deadly elements of Japanese wartime propaganda into his lectures on the writings of Zen Master Dōgen. For example,

the Shinto-derived slogan, “the eight corners of the world under one roof” (hakkō ichiu), was closely connected to the belief that Japan was a divine land ruled by a divine emperor. This served as the basis for Japan’s claim to have been divinely anointed to rule all of Asia. It also meant that Japan was engaged in a “holy war” (seisen).

Additionally, the phrase “self-annihilation for the sake of one’s country” was perhaps the most deadly of all of Japan’s wartime slogans. It demanded that every Japanese citizen, military or civilian, be prepared to die in the war effort. If this claim sounds extreme we need only look at many similar exhortations. For example, in May 1944 Zen Master Kumazawa Taizen, chief abbot of Eihei-ji, the temple where Sawaki trained, wrote:

When the invasion comes, all men and women must become soldiers to ward off the enemy. Our slogan must be, “One person kills one person,” meaning that if one hundred thousand of the enemy come, then we will kill all one hundred thousand, each person killing one. I hear that military practice with bamboo staves has already begun. This is exactly the spirit and practice we need. . . . This is unquestionably the time that all the people of this nation must rouse themselves to action. Now is the time to truly face the problem of death.

And Kumazawa added: “In the present emergency we must resolutely fight to the end. In this effort Zen faith and practice are of great importance.”<sup>19</sup>

Although these are not Sawaki’s words, but those of his ecclesiastical superior, they nevertheless give concrete expression to such

slogans as “one hundred million [citizens] of one mind” and “self-annihilation for the sake of one’s country.” And while it is true that states and their militaries throughout the world have long used religious leaders to promote their wars, seldom, if ever, have religious leaders called on all citizens of their country to carry out actions tantamount to mass suicide.

### **A key piece of information**

The argument can be made that in Sawaki’s case his embrace of wartime Japanese propaganda had little influence beyond his clerical and lay disciples. However, Tanaka provides significant information that indicates the importance of Sawaki’s wartime activities, including his writings, visits to Manchuria and Japanese prisons, etc. Tanaka writes (p. 357), “[Sawaki]-rōshi was also active both inside and outside [of Japan] as a lecturer for the ‘People’s Spiritual Culture Institute’ ( Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo ).” In other words, Sawaki was a lecturer for an institute established in 1932 by the Japanese government’s Ministry of Education for the express purpose of countering leftist thought among students, particularly Marxism and other foreign ideologies, while at the same time promoting loyalty to the emperor and state.

Whether Sawaki was paid for his services we don’t know though it is likely that he was since this institute was directly funded and controlled by the Ministry of Education. In any event, Sawaki had a formal role in the government’s war effort through the Institute. We may speculate that Sawaki was invited to lecture company employees in Manchuria, as well as prison inmates, as an extension of his duties.

### **Sawaki’s Travel to China in 1934**

Tanaka provides further information about the funding for Sawaki’s four month long tour of China in 1934. Tanaka notes (p. 75) that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Japanese government paid for one half of the cost of

Sawaki's four-month visit. Tanaka states (p. 73) that Sawaki received an additional five hundred yen from Imperial Army Lt. General Yanagawa Heisuke. Tanaka states, however, there are conflicting stories about whether Sawaki received the latter sum directly from Yanagawa as well as how close the two men were. Nevertheless, this is one indication of the close relationship that existed between Buddhist leaders and the Japanese government and military during the expansion into Manchuria.

Yet the question lingers, i.e., what did the Japanese military and government hope to gain from a trip like the one undertaken by Sawaki (or, as previously mentioned, by D.T. Suzuki for that matter)? Although Tanaka never directly addresses this question, he does repeatedly mention the increasing tensions between Japan and China. Tanaka quotes Sawaki (p. 97) as follows:

Despite the fact that anti-Japanese feelings grew stronger day by day, I felt the continental [Chinese] people remained as calm and collected as before. I imagine that when [Chinese] visited Japan they must have had some bad experiences. Nonetheless, they spared no effort in guiding a traveler from Japan like me. Well, I think this must be because I came in the shape of a Buddhist priest. There is a long tradition [in China] in which it is natural to harbor good feelings toward priests. I am grateful for that.

I think it can be safely said that in this instance the Japanese government and military got its money's worth.

### **Sawaki's wartime visits to Manchuria**

Still further new information concerns Sawaki's

trips to wartime Manchuria, the first of which took place in June 1941 (although Sakai wrote it took place in May). Tanaka explains that beginning in 1941 (p. 301) Sawaki gave lectures in various parts of that country for the next few years. But what did Sawaki say? Tanaka explains:

At the time of his first preaching tour (junshaku), [Sawaki] made a long trip to Harbin where he addressed some three thousand [Japanese] agricultural pioneers on the outskirts of the city. He told them that they should act humbly toward the Manchurians. Although this was a time before loudspeakers, his voice was as strong as always, and everyone could hear him.

Tanaka provides further details (p. 341):

While in Manchuria, Sawaki accepted invitations for lectures not on his original schedule. One of these was an invitation from the president of the Manchuria Colonial Development Company. Sawaki got in a truck and went to the outskirts of the city of Harbin in Manchuria's interior.

Some three thousand agricultural pioneers were there carrying rifles on their shoulders, undergoing military training.

These pioneers used this month every year to engage in military exercises since they couldn't engage in planting before the end of May. The assumption of their training was that they might have to defend Manchuria from an

invasion from the north [i.e., from the Soviet Union]. A platform the height of the second floor of a house had been built on the training grounds. Kōdō climbed up the ladder and spoke from the platform.

Although Tanaka doesn't mention it, there are several questions that need to be addressed concerning these so-called agricultural pioneers. The first and foremost of these is how landless farmers in Japan suddenly became landowners in Manchuria? In an article entitled, "Japan in Manchuria: Agricultural Emigration in the Japanese Empire, 1932-1945," Kevin McDowell writes:

Often, rather than pioneering uncultivated land, many of the colonists, aided by the heavy-handed methods of the [Japanese] Kwantung Army, the East Asian Development Company, and the Manchukuo government, simply took over Chinese farms. Thus, while lip-service was paid to the notion of opening new land for cultivation, a large percentage of the fields acquired by the colonists were simply taken over from Chinese peasants, who were pressed into selling their property at rock-bottom prices, and then given the choice of either moving out or working for the new Japanese owners.<sup>20</sup>

Second, it is not surprising that military training was important to these emigrant farmers for by 1941 they were fast becoming the object of ever more frequent armed attacks by bands of Chinese and Korean partisans seeking to end the Japanese occupation, not to mention bands of roving bandits. In addition,

this training was equally if not more important to the Japanese Imperial Army stationed in Manchuria, known as the Kwantung Army. As Kobayashi Kōji notes:

The Army expects that colonial emigrants along the frontier will be of great value. In wartime it is absolutely necessary to have Japanese villages and Japanese nationals on the border. . . . Emigrants will defend military facilities, safeguard the border, and supply foodstuffs to the army.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, it is important to understand the overall nature of the colonial enterprise these agricultural pioneers were a part of. Kevin McDowell concludes his article, "Japan in Manchuria: Agricultural Emigration in the Japanese Empire, 1932-1945" as follows:

As the emigration movement grew from a small-scale trial emigration program in 1932 to the mass migration project in 1937, economic objectives and ideological conceptions lost force, as imagery and idealism clashed with realities on the ground and military might and the uneven power balance shaped contact and conflict between the agricultural colonists, Chinese, and other local inhabitants. In the process, the emigrants acted as an instrument of Japanese imperialism, suppressing the Chinese population and fortifying the Manchurian-Soviet border.<sup>22</sup>

Of course, it can be argued that Japanese colonists in Manchuria were doing no more than what colonists have always done, e.g. the

British in India or Africa, the Americans in the Philippines, the French in Indochina, etc. While true, this does not change the basic immorality of the enterprise, i.e. it is an act of theft. At least in theory, all religions oppose theft.

In the case of Buddhism, the second precept that all Buddhists, lay and cleric, pledge to follow is, “Refrain from stealing.” This includes, of course, taking someone else's property. As a priest, Sawaki had pledged to uphold this precept even as he travelled throughout Manchuria in support of Japan's colonial efforts. It strains credibility to the breaking point to believe that Sawaki's only message to Japanese colonists was to “act humbly toward the Manchurians” even as the latter's lands were being taken from them.

Even should Sawaki have called for Japanese colonists to act humbly toward the Manchurians, it wouldn't change the fact that he supported acts of theft on a grand scale. In a postwar statement concerning Japan's wartime actions, Sawaki as much as admitted this. He stated:

With the [Sino-Japanese War](#) (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), we enlarged Japanese territory and annexed Korea. We believed that it really happened. . . . I myself was a soilder [sic] during the Russo-Japanese War and fought hard on the battlefield. But since we had lost what we had gained, I can see that what we did was useless.”

Sawaki clearly recognized that Japan had attempted to “gain” through war what had not been theirs. His statement suggests that it was Japan's failure to hold on to these gains that made the war effort “useless.”

### **Sawaki Lectures in Prison**

Manchuria was not the only place Sawaki was active during the war years. Tanaka describes a 1938 lecture (p. 297) Sawaki gave to prisoners in Tokyo's Kosuge prison. Tanaka notes, “Among the prisoners who listened to Rev. Sawaki's lectures were those who are known as thought offenders (shisō-han).” Tanaka explained that these thought offenders included leftwing figures like Sano Manabu, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Japanese Communist Party, as well as ultranationalists imprisoned for their role in the May 1932 assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi.

Tanaka then quotes a portion of Sawaki's talk, “At the time I intended to become a priest [as a young man], I was wearing black clothing. As a result I was suspected of being a thief and put in prison. Therefore I'm just the same as you.” After that, Tanaka notes, Sawaki talked about the way he had been interrogated as well as subjected to torture by the police.

At this point Tanaka quotes an unidentified informant: “Up to then there had never been a lecturer who spoke in such a down to earth way. It appears the prisoners thought this was someone they could talk to, and they listened with interest to the very end [of his talk].”

Tanaka returns to the reasons (p. 261) for the success of Sawaki's prison talk:

Sawaki, who from childhood had grown up in the worst possible environment, was able to begin his talk with his own experience of having been imprisoned. This is what Buddhism calls the practice of “identification [with others]” (dōji). You begin your talk by completely identifying with the other person. When Sawaki was a young priest he had been suspected of being a thief and spent some days locked up in the



Hyogo Prefectural jail. Sawaki was grateful for this experience because, thanks to it, he was able to overcome the prisoners' antipathy.

Although Tanaka does not give the name of the person who shared the above information, it is likely to have been one of the prison officials present at Sawaki's lecture. This informant was clearly impressed with Sawaki's efforts and recognized that his ability to bond with prisoners was key to the change of attitude necessary to effect *tenkō*. Given this, it is reasonable to assume that Sawaki was invited back on one or more occasions to present further lectures, especially because once "thought offenders" were deemed to have been sufficiently rehabilitated they could be released to join the war effort.

Tanaka describes a second group of prisoners (p. 172), or more accurately "ex-prisoners," Sawaki lectured to. Significantly, this time the group was composed entirely of leftwing thought offenders who were no longer in prison. Like Tanaka himself, the assembled ex-prisoners had all done *tenkō* and repented their previous leftwing affiliations.

Tanaka explains the background (p. 257) to Sawaki's lecture as follows:

Around 1937 a law was passed entitled, "The Law to Protect and Supervise Thought Offenders" ( *Shisō-han Hogo Kansatsu-hō* ). Shortly after I arrived in Tokyo [following my release from prison], I was ordered by the head of the Tokyo Office for Protection and Supervision [of Thought Offenders] to attend a lecture at Sōjiji Temple, one of the head temples of the Sōtō Zen sect located in the Tsurumi district of Kanagawa Prefecture. . .

. All of the approximately forty attendees had been sent there under this law.

As so often in the past, Tanaka reports Sawaki began his lecture as follows:

Due to my service at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, I received the Order of the Golden Kite. But this was not because I had done anything special. Well, if I were to explain it I would say that it was simply a case of getting lucky on the spur of the moment.

Tanaka's description once again demonstrates Sawaki's astute involvement in the process of rehabilitating thought offenders, i.e., political prisoners. Sawaki's earlier lecture in prison was definitely not a one-time affair. In addition, the fact that the law enforcement agency responsible for supervising thought offenders made the arrangements for Sawaki's lecture indicates that the content of his message was congruent with their ideological agenda.

Although two examples of Sawaki's lecturing to thought offenders do not prove his continuous involvement in this kind of activity, at a minimum they suggest a pattern of behavior. Tanaka further reinforces this pattern when he praises Sawaki (p. 261) for "having gone to the police and prisons." Sawaki's assigned role was, after all, not only to oppose Marxist thought but also to promote loyalty to emperor and state. Given the above, it is once again reasonable to assume that Sawaki addressed thought offenders with some degree of regularity.

From 1938 onwards Sawaki found time to give talks to those "thought offenders" who had been freed from prison following disavowal of their previous leftwing, anti-war views but were

still under police supervision. He also went into prisons holding such offenders in order to convince them to cooperate with the prosecution of the war.

Sawaki was viewed as being particularly good at this kind of work not least because his own poverty-stricken childhood had contributed to a down-to-earth ability to identify with offenders. For example, he typically began his talks with a description of his own one-month imprisonment at age eighteen when he had been mistakenly arrested as a thief.

### Further police connections

Two additional pieces of evidence suggest Sawaki enjoyed a close relationship with the police. The first is the regular meditation classes (zazen-kai) Sawaki held for policemen. Tanaka informs us (p. 157) that Sawaki's contact with the police began at the beginning of 1936, just at the time of a major uprising by young Imperial Way faction-affiliated officers and their subordinates known as the February 26 Incident. In fact, Sawaki had to postpone his first lecture to police division heads due to the imposition of martial law that accompanied the uprising.

Sawaki's lectures and zazen practice became so popular that he was invited to conduct them on a regular basis at the police academy. The two-hour sessions, consisting of an hour lecture and an hour of zazen, were called "Life is Zen" (Seikatsu soku Zen). Sawaki personally guided the sessions once a month and his disciple, Inatomi Shūyū, led the group on the other weeks. Tanaka makes it very clear (p. 159) that these sessions were directly connected to the need for the police to "steel body and mind" (rensei) in what was already understood to be the national crisis facing Japan.

The second event concerns Sawaki's move in March 1945 to the home of Maruyama Tsurukichi, the top police official previously introduced in Part I of this article. We learn

that the dormitory and Zen training center Sawaki ran for Sōtō Zen-affiliated Komazawa University (p. 304) was closed because of the government's order requiring the evacuation of Tokyo due to the firebombing. By way of background Tanaka explains: "The scale of the wartime chaos gradually increased, and the citizens of Tokyo were in a miserable state, frantically running around this way and that."

Tanaka then explains the reason Sawaki chose to move to Maruyama's residence: "In March 1945 [Sawaki] moved to the home of Maruyama Tsurukichi, former police commissioner, who had been a long time devotee (shinja) of Rev. Kōdō."

Given Sawaki's decade long relationship with the police as noted above, it is hardly surprising to learn of the close relationship between these two men. Nevertheless, Tanaka failed to mention that by this time Maruyama had been put in charge of preparing all of northeastern Japan for the expected Allied invasion. Sawaki's devotee was now responsible for issuing, or at least conveying, the order for the many thousands of women (among others) in his area of responsibility to repel the Allied forces once they landed. Armed with sharpened bamboo spears, these women were expected to make a suicidal attack against Allied tanks equipped with flamethrowers, machine guns and well-armed soldiers.

It was the above information that led me to conclude in Part I of "Zen Masters on the Battlefield" as follows: "Maruyama extended this invitation [to stay at his house] because of Sawaki's longtime cooperation with Japanese police officials, part of whose wartime job was to apprehend and imprison anyone suspected of being opposed to the government and its war effort."

In light of the above evidence, it is impossible to believe that Maruyama, as Sawaki's devotee, was unaware of the many contributions Sawaki

had made to police activities.

## Conclusion

Although further examples are available, I trust the basis for my overall conclusions concerning Sawaki's wartime record is now clear. Sawaki's actions, like his teachings, were those of one who was totally committed to supporting the Japanese war effort. On the one hand, Sakai Tokugen and Tanaka Tadao did their best to simply ignore, if not erase, Sawaki's wartime words and actions. On the other hand, their own clear sympathies for Japan's war effort led them, in writing for a postwar Japanese audience, to provide bits and pieces of a sanitized version of Sawaki's war-related activities even as they downplayed the specific content of his war writings.

In Tanaka's case, when this was not possible, as in the case of Ichikawa Hakugen, he sought to ridicule this Rinzai priest and professor of Zen Studies for having dared to criticize Sawaki. Nevertheless, it should now be clear that Sawaki's wartime actions were entirely consistent with his wartime writings, writings that were beyond his disciples' ability to erase from the historical record. In short, Sawaki was but one of many Zen masters who wrote and acted similarly.

While the actions of these Buddhist leaders may be described as "patriotic," what should be a matter of deep concern to followers of Buddhism is the way in which they twisted and misappropriated Buddhist teachings to support Japan's aggression in World War II, resulting in one of the greatest collective bloodlettings in human history. Although referenced only briefly, Sawaki even sought to justify the aggression of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.<sup>24</sup>

If such abuses of Buddhism were no more than 'past history', the importance of bringing this issue up yet again might be questioned. Sadly, however, it is the countries of which Western Buddhists are a part, i.e., the United States and

its European allies, who remain in the forefront of the ongoing killing taking place in the world today, including the invasion of other countries under false pretenses and the assassination of the inhabitants of additional countries by drones, etc. on a truly worldwide scale.

Thus, the question of how Western Buddhists will react to this carnage is an immediate and ongoing challenge, for react they must. To date, the most obvious reaction has been the creation of a Buddhist military chaplaincy within the U.S. military. Although not well known, some American soldiers stationed on the battlefield, e.g., in Iraq, now take part in Buddhist chaplain-led zazen practice before going out on missions to "take out" the alleged enemy.<sup>25</sup>

It is noteworthy that U.S. Navy Buddhist chaplain and True Pure Land (Shin) priest, Lt. Jeanette Yuinen Shin justified killing the enemy using rationales similar to those of her Japanese Buddhist predecessors. In a January 2008 Dharma talk entitled: "Shakyamuni - The First Warrior," Shin noted, "Siddhartha Gautama (his birth name) was born into the kshatriya varna, or caste, of ancient India/Nepal. This was the caste of the warriors, the rulers and aristocrats of ancient India. . . .The Buddha's Enlightenment was described as a 'battle' between himself and Mara, the embodiment of death and evil."

Shin continued:

The ancient texts emphasize the need for determination, sacrifice, and courage for Buddhists to follow the path of Buddha-dharma, to bear up under hardships in order to achieve the highest goal a human being can attain: to conquer death, fear, ignorance, evil, and thereby attain liberation. The qualities of a good warrior are exactly the qualities needed for a

serious Buddhist practitioner.<sup>26</sup>  
 (Emphasis mine)

According to Buddhist chaplains like Shin, American Buddhist soldiers are merely carrying out Śākyamuni Buddha's mission to defeat evil as they go about killing America's enemies throughout the world. In that sense, the likes of Sawaki, Yasutani, D.T. Suzuki, et al. have already won the battle for the "hearts and minds" of America's Buddhist military chaplains and the more than five thousand Buddhist soldiers in their care.<sup>27</sup> But the question must be asked, is this the message of Buddhism?

The Japanese have a saying that has much to teach us in this regard, i.e., hanmen kyōshi or "teachers by negative example." In this limited sense, Sawaki, et al. have much to teach us, most especially about how readily and easily the Buddha-dharma can be coopted, corrupted and ultimately betrayed in order to justify the deaths of human beings, aka the 'enemy', on a truly massive scale, not to mention the death of one's own soldiers. Instead of bringing a release from suffering, Buddhism becomes, like other world religions, a tool to rationalize and enhance suffering many times over.

If Buddhists are ever to free themselves from this entrapment, the first step is to recognize what has been done, and by whom. Toward this end, it is time to move beyond the denials and obfuscations that have been such a prominent part of the current debate on Sawaki Kōdō, among others. Only then can Sawaki's role as one of many "teachers by negative example" be recognized. Once the appropriate lessons have been learned, we can transcend national chauvinism and proceed to create a Buddhism that is truly dedicated to the welfare of all sentient beings.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See articles [here](#) and [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Sawaki, “Shōji o Akirameru Kata” (The Method of Clarifying Life and Death) in the May 1944 issue of *Daihōrin*, pp. 5-7. Available on the Web [here](#) (accessed 29 September 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Sawaki, “Shōji o Akirameru Kata” (The Method of Clarifying Life and Death) in the May 1944 issue of *Daihōrin*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Sakai Tokugen, *Sawaki Kōdō - Kikigaki*. Tokyo: Kōdansha Gakujutsu-bunkō, 1984, p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>6</sup> For further background on the “Imperial Way Faction” see: 1) Crosier, Andrew, *The Causes of the Second World War*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1997; 2) Buruma, Ian, *Inventing Japan, 1854-1964*. Modern Library, 2004; 3) Samuels, Richard J., *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*. Cornell University Press, 2007; 4) Hane, Mikiso, *Modern Japan: A Historical Survey*. Westview Press, 2001; and 5) Harries, Meirion, *Soldiers of the Sun: The Rise and Fall of the Imperial Japanese Army*. Random House, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Victoria, *Zen War Stories*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, p. 187.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>11</sup> See the relevant entry in Suzuki’s “Chronology” on the English homepage of the Matsugaoka website available [here](#): (accessed on 13 November 2014).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 264-69.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Victoria, “Zen Masters on the Battlefield, Part I,” available on the Internet [here](#) (accessed 11 November 2014).

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Victoria, *Zen at War* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boulder, Colorado: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, p. 144.

<sup>15</sup> Park Eunsik, *The Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement*. Quoted in the “March 1<sup>st</sup> Movement,” available on the Internet [here](#) (accessed 17 November 2014). See also: 1) Cumings, Bruce, *Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. New York: W.N. Norton and Company, 1997; 2) Han, Woo-keun, *The History of Korea*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1988; 3) Eugene Kim, ed., *Korea’s Response to Japan*. Western Michigan University, 1977; and 4) Baldwin, Frank, *The March First Movement: Korean Challenge and Japanese Response*. New York; Columbia University, 1972.

<sup>16</sup> Tokyo: *Daihōrin-kaku*, 1995.

<sup>17</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the page numbers included in this article refer to the second volume of Tanaka’s book.

<sup>18</sup> Originally published in the January 1974 issue of the *Risō Sekai-shi* (Ideal World Magazine), available on the Web [here](#) (accessed 15 November 2014).

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, pp. 137.

<sup>20</sup> McDowell, Kevin. “Japan in Manchuria: Agricultural Emigration in the Japanese Empire, 1932-1945.” Available on the Web [here](#) (accessed 30 November 2014).

<sup>21</sup> Kobayashi Kōji, *Manshū Imin no Mura*, 1977, p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> McDowell, Kevin. “Japan in Manchuria: Agricultural Emigration in the Japanese Empire, 1932-1945.” Available on the Web [here](#) (accessed 30 November 2014).

<sup>23</sup> The quotation is taken from the English translation of Section 15, “Loyalty,” included in excerpts from *The Dharma of Homeless Kōdō* (

Yadonashi Hokkusan ) by Uchiyama Kōshō. Available on the Web [here](#) (accessed on 26 June 2014).

<sup>24</sup> See reference to Hitler and Mussolini as righteous “demons” in “The End of a (Zen) Buddhist Myth” available on the Web [here](#): (accessed 29 November 2014).

<sup>25</sup> For one example of such military-based,

zazen practice in Iraq, see [here](#).

<sup>26</sup> The entire article, “Shakyamuni - The First Warrior,” is posted on the Website of the “Buddhist Military Sangha” available [here](#): (accessed 24 November 2014).

<sup>27</sup> According to Jeff Brady in ‘Military Buddhist Chapel Represents Tolerance’, National Public Radio (13 October 2009), as of June 2009 there are 5,287 Buddhists serving in the US military.