

29; e.g. Ōbaku-shū's Tetsugen received this title in the Edo period). There are also a number of cases of sloppiness, e.g. when the author forgets to list Chapter 3 in his Introduction (pp. 11-12), or categorizes a commentary under sutras (p. 87) and the *Sanbō-kotoba* under hagiographic texts. (p. 99)

Finally, it is deplorable that the book contains not a single Sino-Japanese character, especially of the titles of primary texts and important terms. How can a publisher justify such a publication in the age of highly developed, multi-lingual word-processing software? But what is worse, the publisher charges for a book of 173 pages. the shameless price of US \$ 180 (present listing on Amazon), which makes \$ 10 for one page! Hence, regrettably this book will be beyond the budget of ordinary students and scholars, it will be available only in a few libraries.

Putting criticism aside, this book closes an important gap in Western studies of Nara Buddhism. It contains valuable translations of primary sources as well as a number of helpful maps and charts. Hopefully, it will encourage further research on other important monks of this period as well.

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Terre Pure, Zen et Autorité: La Dispute de l'Ère Jōō et la Réfutation du Mémoire sur des Contradictions de la Foi par Ryōnyo du Honganji.

Paris: Collège de France Institut des Hautes Études Japonaises, 2007, 159 pp.

Jérôme Ducor is the major European scholar researching Shin Buddhist history. As his website (www.pitaka.ch) describes, he is Swiss, received his doctorate in Japanese Studies from Geneva University, and specialized in Japanese Buddhism at Ryūkoku University in Kyoto. Currently he serves as Conservator at the Asian Department of the Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève. His prolific scholarly work, written mainly in French, has provided many essential contributions concerning the early development of Shin Buddhism, as well as French translations of the *Amida Sūtra* and Hōnen's *Senchaku-shū*.

In this intensively researched volume, he takes up the problem of the so-called doctrinal dispute of the Jōō era (*Jōō gekishō* 承応闘論 1653-1655) within the Nishi Hongan-ji branch of the Shin school. This, along with the Meiwa Era dispute (*Meiwa hōron*, ca. 1764-1770) and the famous Three Karmic Acts Controversy (*Sangō wakuran*, ca. 1762-1804) constituted the three principal episodes of doctrinal controversy in the Nishi Hongan-ji institution during the Tokugawa period, the resolution of which resulted in part in the characteristic dry doctrinal systematizations of True Pure Land doctrine which are still inherited today. Ducor's

most specific goal is to understand what became the central document of the *Jōō gekishō*, a writing called the *Ha anjin sōi no oboegaki* (Memorandum on Divergencies from a Proper Understanding of Shin "Faith") which was issued in 1654 by Ryōnyo (1612-1662), the thirteenth hereditary head of Nishi Hongan-ji.

The first four chapters of the book provide facts which frame the document. As explained in Chapter 1, since Hongan-ji was a relatively new Buddhist tradition, its internal scholastic tradition had emerged slowly. The basic scholasticism was initiated with Shinran's great-grandson Zonkaku and continued to some extent with the eighth head Rennyō, but it was also associated with the development, as the Hongan-ji headquarters evolved, of a group of liturgical specialists (known as *midōshu* among other terms) who gradually became charged with the intellectual side of the tradition. As the Hongan-ji worked out formal ways of transmitting its authoritative texts from generation to generation of the leadership, it also realized that its own textual study was inadequate compared to that found in other types of Japanese Buddhism.

Thus, as elucidated in Chapter 2, this realization led the foundation of the first Shin seminary (*gakuryō*) in 1639 at Hongan-ji headquarters by Ryōnyo, who seems to have been especially aware of the need for formal pedagogy. The school consisted of a lecture hall and dormitory suitable for about sixty students. An office of head instructor (*nōke*) was established and a tradition of summer study retreats (*ango*) was begun. The best of the teachers and students were extremely well-studied and widely informed in Buddhist teachings. The term of the second *nōke*, Saigin (lived 1605-1663, began as *nōke* in 1647) was marked by an increased formalization and regulation of practices which reflected the overall ethos of systematization of Buddhism which was taking place in the seventeenth century.

The *Jōō gekishō* dispute, narrated in Chapter 3, began in 1653 when one of Saigin's leading students, Gekkan, undertook to challenge some of his teacher's behavior and ideas by setting out a written document of accusation. As Ducor notes, the document's arguments were a bit confused, but along with some complaints about Saigin's leadership, the most interesting point was the claim that Saigin was using forms of expression based on Zen and the Zen language of "true self" in his instruction about Shin Buddhism and thus seriously misleading his students. Saigin defended himself with his own written counter-statement; the hereditary head Ryōnyo tried to calm the situation diplomatically; unfortunately Gekkan was not appeased. Unpredictably, at this point what had been a rather small scholarly quarrel became a much bigger and qualitatively different conflict when Junshū, the head of a major subbranch of Shin called Kōshō-ji, intervened on the side of Gekkan. Junshū was apparently using the occasion opportunistically to press Kōshō-ji's institutional interests in challenging the regnant authority of Nishi Hongan-ji over the smaller branch, a position of primacy which was being solidified as the Tokugawa regulatory system for Buddhism was becoming secured. Junshū

penned his own attack against Hongan-ji, which was answered by Ryōnyo in the *Ha anjin sōi no oboegaki*. However, of more concrete significance was that Junshū also took steps towards the radical act of separating Kōshō-ji from Hongan-ji organizationally. The institutional disagreement was so severe that it could not be resolved by the clerical parties (who were also involved in many personal and familial relationships with each other and with other Kyoto elites) so it was quickly referred to officials of the *bakufu* for evaluation and judgment. The failure of the clerics to resolve the matter on their own internally was a fundamental violation of order in the *mibun* (status) system of the regime, and the *bakufu* consequently responded with punishment. After Ryōnyo and Junshū were called in person to Edo for interrogation in 1655, Ryōnyo had to agree to having his seminary torn down, because originally he had never obtained proper permission from the *bakufu* to build it; and Gekkan and Junshū lost their temple positions.

In Chapter 4, Ducor briefly surveys the subsequent history of the Nishi Hongan-ji seminary. Saigin returned to teaching, but the conflict drove some young priests out of Shin Buddhism, including Tetsugen Dōko, who later became famous for his leadership in Obaku Zen. Seminary operations were held in temporary quarters until it was possible officially to re-found the school, now titled *gakurin*, in 1693. The *nōke* system continued until after the conclusion of the *Sangō wakuran* at the beginning of the nineteenth century. That third major dispute involved among other things disputed doctrinal authority claims pushed forward idiosyncratically by the head instructor, and as a result afterwards the system in which doctrinal power was overinvested in a single chief was replaced by a rotating committee system (*kangaku*) which continues today.

Like the *Sangō wakuran* later, the *Jōō gekishō* was a complicated event which mixed intellectual, personal, institutional, and political conflicts, and it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions from it except that the Hongan-ji institution was full of intensely engaged, ambitious participants. What is probably most widely interesting for readers is the Buddhological side of the dispute. This is where Ducor's fifth chapter comes in, which is a translation (for the first time into a Western language) of Ryōnyo's document (the text occupies six pages in volume 50 of a modern printed recension of premodern texts, the *Shinshū zensho*; the Japanese is reprinted in Ducor's volume for reference). This is followed by a sixth chapter explicating the translation.

Like other such Buddhist disputations, the argument was carried on by citation from authoritative texts and commentary on them, and was thus heavy with the characteristic language of Pure Land Buddhism. Junshū, following Gekkan, had criticized Ryōnyo on three main points: the very act of scholarship in Shin as an activity leading away from the real teaching; the Zennish, monistic or mind-only (*yuishiki*) content alleged to be promoted in Saigin's thought; and excessive ritualism at Hongan-ji.

Ryōnyo defended in his response the tradition of doing scholarship and in

addition the necessity for a degree of formalization. However, perhaps centrally, he also carefully addressed point two about the alleged Zennish language of Saigin. As anyone familiar with Shin doctrine knows, it contains both monistic and dualistic aspects, and the interpretation of the Pure Land can be one of its difficult technical points. Shinran had replaced, or at least supplemented, the ancient, conventional dualistic notion of the Pure Land as a karmically transitional "place" near Amida Buddha with a more subtle idea of the Pure Land as perfect enlightenment itself which yet retained a kind of "dualistic" spin (the Pure Land though "outside" of one's ego-consciousness is not a physical place but a representation of perfect enlightenment). Meanwhile, as Ducor points out, straightforwardly monistic or idealist interpretations of the Pure Land ("the Pure Land is right here within your own mind") also had a very long history of development, particularly in China. Post-Tang Buddhism tended to be a mixture of the conventional dualistic understanding and the monistic understanding, neither of these options being congruent with Shinran's idea. At the time of the Jōō quarrel in the seventeenth century, Chinese Buddhism was being reintroduced to Japan via the Ming teachers who eventually inspired the Obaku Zen school. This matter was being directly addressed by Saigin when he had defended the primacy of the special "dualistic" position advocated by Shin against the versions offered by Zen. As Ducor makes clear in his commentary, Saigin was completely aware of the various ideas of the Pure Land and was refusing to isolate Shin intellectually, but at the same time was holding on to Shin's characteristic position nonetheless.

Ducor does not explore the matter deeply, but why was so much perceived to be at stake Buddhologically in the disputes? Why argue vehemently about the choices of language? Was it just about sectarian identity? This is not the place for a full discussion, but two points might be noted. First, while the construction of institutional/sectarian identity in the most obvious sense was presumably present, a serious apprehension of *tariki* language and psychology were also needed to rationalize the distinctively equalized, internalized spiritual attitude fostered in the Shin social tradition. Monism as a language and attitude was linked to the conception of ritual simulation of the perfect Buddha, as in the case of Zen, and therefore monistic language was associated with monastic traditions and all that those traditions had implied in Japanese history. Second, while Shin Buddhist doctrine contained both monistic and dualistic language, it privileged the latter for practical existential purposes of religious feeling. The implication of Shin teaching was that monism was not a psychologically realistic understanding of the human mind and its irreducible defectiveness. However, Shin teachers were still able to use one kind of language or another depending on whether they meant to refer theoretically to ultimate ontology or pragmatically to the human condition; this two-dimensional rhetoric in fact made the Shin discourse *more complex* than the teaching in other kinds of Buddhism.

Of special interest to the modern eye, considering the modern tradition of social criticism and populism in Shin Buddhism, is also how the *Jōō gekishō* illuminates the existence of very long standing tensions in Shin about tendencies to formalism within the institution. Shin Buddhism, like many other religious traditions, has for a very long time struggled with the contradictions between a foundation of austere egalitarian ideals, the worldly success produced by those same ideals, and the subsequent distortions produced by success.

This is an excellent piece of work. Ducor is one of the few foreign scholars to have researched exhaustively in the original source texts of premodern Shinshū (including for his purposes in this book various manuscript items in the library of Ryūkoku University) and his data are based on deep familiarity with the material including the relevant bibliography in the various languages which are involved. The back matter also includes a glossary of the institutional offices and titles which had developed in Nishi Hongan-ji by the early seventeenth century.

The content is perhaps a bit specialized. Total understanding of the material relies on some background knowledge of matters such as orthodox Shin doctrine, the history of Hongan-ji after Rennyō, and the Tokugawa period systematization of Buddhism, which Ducor does not fill in in this book. However, any reader will be able to get the unmistakable message that Shin Buddhism in the early modern period in Japan was a large and sophisticated phenomenon which deserves as much attention as Zen.

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Steven Heine. *Zen Skin, Zen Marrow: Will The Real Zen Buddhism Please Stand Up?*

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The latest work from Steven Heine, *Zen Skin, Zen Marrow: Will the Real Zen Buddhism Please Stand Up?* resulted from a recent combative encounter he witnessed while presiding on an East Asian ethics panel at a national academic conference. The confrontation took place between certain panelists who had presented the possibilities of traditional Zen as a viable response to ethical challenges of the contemporary world and audience members who declared the moral failings of Zen based on evidence taken from critical studies of its institutional history. These two factions (designated by Heine as "Traditional Zen Narrative" and "Historical and Cultural Criticism") have evolved within the academy over the past twenty years and have become increasing intractable, with little effort on either side to recognize the value of their counterpart's contributions to the field of Zen studies. Attempting to