BOOK REVIEWS

Zen Ritual: Studies of Zen Buddhist Theory in Practice. Edited by Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. xiii+337 pages. Paperback $26.00.

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This book is a welcome addition to the growing corpus of studies focusing on ritual—that aspect of religion which has long taken a back seat to doctrinal and textual analysis. This is particularly true in the case of Zen studies, where the common perception, largely established by D. T. Suzuki, was that Zen in its "pure" form was a non-discursive spiritual technology that one used to transcend the mundane—a rubric which contains not only language and texts, but also performance and ritual. As the following chapters make clear, a discussion of Zen in China and Japan divorced from its ritual context is no discussion at all—ritual was and continues to be one of the central components of Zen as a lived religion, as opposed to its fabricated and popular image. We tend to broadly divide religion into the two categories of the performative (ritual) and the cognitive (language, text, analysis), but one would do well to ask whether these two facets are capable of being discussed separately. Once religion becomes the object of study and observation, are these not two parts of an organic whole? One of the great merits of this study and others of its kind is that the investigations into ritual behaviors entail fieldwork that requires observing ritual in action, so to speak, which can then be subjected to a textual consideration. Case studies of ritual are felicitous expressions of this academic and methodological meld, and this volume is a testament to this revealing and suggestive mode of scholarship.

The introductory chapter by Dale S. Wright provides a sustained contemplation on the nature of ritual in both a Buddhist context as well as a theoretical one. Wright traces the ritual dimension of the Zen tradition through two cultural legacies—the Confucian and the Buddhist—both of which combined to form the unique ritual configuration seen in the Zen schools.

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When the question as to what exactly constitutes Zen ritual is raised, the author draws on Catherine Bell, a scholar doing some of the most cutting-edge work on ritual. This approach involves bypassing a set definition of ritual that would influence us to see something in a particular light and instead advises us to focus on the practice itself and identify "ritual-like" aspects. As the author notes, imagination has a transformative aspect in the context of ritual, a prominent example being zazen, when the practitioner engages in the act as if he or she was an enlightened Buddha. This performative approach, in which the person undergoes fundamental change, is one central theme of ritual in general and Zen in particular.

Chapter 1, "Ritual in Japanese Zen Buddhism," by T. Griffith Foulk, over sixty pages in length, is a detailed and thought-provoking study that in part aims to critique the modern scholarly view that Zen rejects ritual, or that it tolerates it as part of "popular" demand. He demonstrates that the Japanese Zen schools never rejected ritual practices in the manner that some modern scholars and commentators have portrayed, and in fact ritual has been, and continues to be, a mainstay of East Asian Buddhism. Foulk also spends a considerable part of his essay presenting an overview of the full range of ritual activities practiced in Japanese Zen temples. His essay is divided into three sections: "The Apologetics of Ritual in Japanese Zen," "The History of Ritual in Japanese Zen," and "Ritual in Contemporary Japanese Zen." One of the many important points that Foulk develops throughout his essay is that the modern claims foisted upon the Zen school (both from within as well as from outside) do not have premodern substantiation in any textual or historical form. Foulk attempts to disabuse the reader of the notion, largely developed in the Meiji and Taishō eras, of Chan's deterioration during the Song and the following dynasties. Foulk writes: "One key to understanding the disdain with which the Japanese viewed the Chinese Buddhism of recent centuries is the fundamental difference in the social organization of the Buddhist sangha in China and Japan" (p. 29), which he clarifies by contrasting the long history of maintaining independent monastic institutions in Japan with the single Buddhist order that existed in China. The lack of understanding regarding the social and political structure of the Buddhist institution in China from the Song period onward has been the source of charges of "syncretism" (not value-neutral in the Japanese context, more akin to the meaning of "mongrel") and degradation of Chinese Chan, which of course found its most felicitous and convenient target in Ōbaku Zen, the Zen movement founded in Japan by Yinyuan Longqi (Jp. Ingen Ryūki) in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Within the second section, to highlight the ritualistic basis present in much of Japanese Buddhism, Foulk points out that in spite of the stress of modern scholars on the "pure" practices of the Pure Land, True Pure Land, and Nichiren temples, the majority of ritual practices at these temples are comprised of funerals and services for ancestral spirits, which were themselves borrowed from the Zen tradition in the Edo period (p. 47). As he indicates, the Japanese Zen involvement with ritual owes a great deal to the rules of purity (*shingi*) from the Song and Yuan periods, of which the much-maligned Ōbaku monks were legitimate heirs.

The third section, "Ritual in Contemporary Japanese Zen," is particularly valuable as it provides a virtual (in the literary sense) tour of various services and aspects of ritual practice in modern Zen temples, which includes the chanting curriculum. Foulk, who has spent considerable time in such training monasteries, employs his experiential and scholarly apparatuses to bring these aspects to life on the page. The final part of the essay examines in detail the procedure for the funeral of a lay follower as it has been handed down in the Sōtō Zen tradition.

Toward the end of the chapter, D. T. Suzuki appears as one of the modern scholars who has described the feeding of hungry ghosts as a "Shingon element" that does not really belong in Zen (p. 79). However, throughout this informative essay, Foulk lays bare the untenability of "syncretism," showing that what have been called "Shingon" and "Pure Land" elements in the name of presenting an imagined "pure Zen" have been, and continue to be, integral parts of Zen monastic ritual.

In chapter 2, "Chan Rituals of the Abbots' Ascending the Dharma Hall to Preach," Mario Poceski sets out to provide a historical survey of the Chan rituals subsumed under the category of *shangtang*, or "ascending the dharma hall [to preach]." To this end, he starts with a brief review of the preaching rituals current in medieval China, those which served as templates for the liturgical models distinctive to the Chan school. An examination of the sermons of Chan teachers from the Tang period follows, as this was the period when the term *shangtang* was first used to denote sermons of Chan teachers. The following section takes up the Five Dynasties (907–960) and early Song periods when what appears to be an iconoclastic form of anti-ritualism first emerged. The chapter ends with a consideration of how the historical development of certain ritual forms such as *shangtang* reveals patterns on the process of identity formation within Chan.

Poceski's argument is helped by the space he devotes to an explanation of his terms and concepts, in which he defines and discusses what exactly

constitutes Buddhist lectures. By way of a first-hand account of Tang-period lectures, he draws on the travel diary of Ennin (799–852), in which we find a description of a scripture lecture he witnessed. Once Poceski directly takes up the issue of sermons in Tang Chan, he does so by providing a broad sample of some of the most fundamental Chan texts such as Huangbo's sermons included in the *Wanling lu* (Wanling Record), the *Chanmen guishi* (Regulations of the Chan School), and the *Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*.

Chapter 3, "Buddhist Rituals for Protecting the Country in Medieval Japan: Myōan Eisai's 'Regulations of the Zen School,'" by Albert Welter, seeks to challenge the individualistic presuppositions characteristic of the modern interpretations of Zen monastic training through a close examination of Eisai's *Promoting Zen for Protecting the Country* (*Kōzen gokokuron*). Welter shows that while Zen today is often perceived as a curriculum with the sole purpose of engendering the enlightenment experience (*satori*), in medieval Japan Zen was adopted for its suitability as a means to promote the imperial cause and the fortunes of the Japanese state. Also revealed is the strict ethical agenda that accompanied this and which served as the basis for not only a personal and moral purification, but also as a purifying and transforming influence on society as a whole.

As Welter points out, the Kamakura *bakufu* leaders were not attracted to Zen for its supposed spiritual qualities so much as for its more practical ones, which previously were demanded of Tendai and Shingon. These include such functions as honoring the dead, ensuring victory in warfare, and the mollifying of suffering caused by such natural disasters as drought, earthquakes, etc. An important point of this agenda, as Welter correctly identifies, is the return to monastic discipline and a stricter interpretation of the precepts—prerequisites for improving the ethical standing of the clergy, which would have a direct effect on the enhancement of the country. This was not morality for morality's sake, but rather a strategy with a very practical and clear aim in mind.

Chapter 4, "Is Dōgen's Eiheiji Temple 'Mt. T'ien-t'ung East'?: Geo-Ritual Perspectives on the Transition from Chinese Ch'an to Japanese Zen," by Steven Heine, questions how closely related the practices at Chinese and Japanese temples in the thirteenth century were. He takes as his focus the case of Eiheiji and Mt. T'ien-t'ung, the Chinese temple where Dōgen attained enlightenment under Ju-ching. The chapter compares key elements of religious and ritual practices at the two temples from a geo-ritual perspective, which consists of looking at how the overall social environment and cultural context affected ritual activities.

Under the subheading "Chinese Ch'an Temples at the Time of Dōgen's Arrival," Heine provides a short but informative urban history of the Ming-chou area which helps to situate the geographical context that Dōgen encountered upon his arrival in China. Heine also spends some time tracing Dōgen's movements while in China. This is followed by a consideration of the reasons for Dōgen's move to Echizen and the founding of Eiheiji, for which he cites texts such as the *Hokyoki* and the *Kenzeiki*, in addition to Dōgen's own *waka* poetry. Heine then turns to the crux of the chapter in which he argues that although the two temples indeed have common features, the differences, even taking into consideration basic cultural distinctions, are outstanding. The three aspects he chooses to focus on are location, institutional history, and styles of practice.

In chapter 5, "Zazen as an Enactment Ritual," Taigen Dan Leighton considers zazen not as a means to attain enlightenment, but rather as the ritual enactment and expression of awakened awareness, which, he reminds us, is a historically significant approach to Zen meditation. His investigation begins with examining Dōgen's ritual instructions for meditation practice, especially as seen in the monastic regulations for the monks' hall found in the *Eihei shingi*, and then proceeds to Dōgen's relevant teachings about meditation contained in his masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō*, followed by examples drawn from the *Eihei kōroku*. These are supplemented by a look at a few other Zen sources.

In the first section, "Zen as Tantra," Leighton reminds us that enactment practice is usually associated with the esoteric branch of Buddhism, and that since a *mikkyō* heritage has come to underlie all of Japanese Buddhism, Zen has also obviously been influenced by this stream of Buddhist practice. He expresses this as: "For Dōgen and others, Zen shares with the Vajrayana tradition the heart of spiritual activity and praxis as the enactment of buddha awareness and physical presence, rather than aiming at developing a perfected, formulated understanding" (p. 168). Throughout the chapter, the author includes numerous passages from Dōgen that skillfully demonstrate the emphasis accorded this approach to practice.

As the latter part of the chapter relates, this way of thinking, while found throughout Dōgen's writings, is not Dōgen's discovery. We see these themes in esoteric practice as well as in Chinese Chan. Leighton points to such well-known cases as Nanyue telling Huineng that "practice-realization cannot be defiled" and Mazu's maxim that "[t]his very mind is Buddha," which imply an enactment rather than a goal-based approach to practice. Leighton investigates other prominent figures of the Chan tradition, including Shitou Xiqian

and Hongzhi Zhengjue. The final part of the chapter considers zazen as ritual enactment in Sōtō after Dōgen.

Chapter 6, "Women and Dōgen: Rituals Actualizing Empowerment and Healing," by Paula K. R. Arai, is a case study of two rituals—the *Anan kōshiki* and the *Jizō nagashi*, which are led by Sōtō Zen nuns of the Aichi Senmon Nisōdō in Nagoya. The author takes an ethnographic approach to her study, owing to the dearth of documentation on the rituals. The author's stated aims are "to examine and understand the lived dynamics and how people create, express, and change themselves through ritualized behavior" (pp. 185–86) by taking these two rituals which help empower and heal Zen Buddhist women.

The rituals themselves are described at length, which helps to give the reader a clear picture of their performative aspects. *Anan kōshiki*, which the author describes as an aspect of a Buddhist approach to social change through non-confrontational methods, is a means to assert and confirm the nuns as legitimate heirs of the Buddha's teaching. This is accomplished through expressing gratitude to Ānanda for advocating allowing women to enter the order, and through their expression of gratitude they are empowered. The reader comes to see the extent to which social inequalities underlie the rituals and psychological lives of the nuns.

The *Jizō nagashi* is a means of communal healing that is centered around fostering a feeling of interrelatedness based partly on shared grief. As it helps one deal with the loss of loved ones and the healing process, Arai states that it falls into the "ancestor/memorial" ritual category. The theme of interrelatedness is central, and as the author states, "In a Sōtō Zen context, healing equals awareness of one's Buddha nature." The great merit of this chapter is that the author has opened up the world of Buddhist women to us, showing how communal ritual plays the role of social foil against the male-dominated society that surrounds them.

Chapter 7, "Invocation of the Sage: The Ritual to Glorify the Emperor," by Michel Mohr, closely considers the ritual of "Invoking the Sage" (Jp. *shukushin*, Ch. *zhusheng*) that is performed in most Zen monasteries throughout Japan, regardless of affiliation. As the author indicates, in light of the events of the previous century, the relationship between the state and religion in Japan is a complex one, which explains the lack of sources detailing this fascinating story. In Mohr's investigation into one aspect of the connection between Buddhism and the emperor, he considers the Daoist connection, an important yet neglected area of Buddhist studies, and particularly in its influence on the imperial house.

The author briefly describes the two phases of the ritual, the first of which is led by the head abbot and consists of prostrations followed by the recitation of sutras, and the second in which all the participants walk around the buildings of the monastery reciting sutras and *dhāraṇīs* dedicated to the well-being of the emperor and the country. As Mohr informs us, until the Tang dynasty, rituals surrounding the emperor were associated with Daoist lineages of the Tiantai and Tantric schools, thus the Chan monks were in need of increasing their own role with the sovereign power. The "invocation of the sage" was one means by which to do this.

The chapter then turns to Japan, where the author considers native antecedents to the *shukushin* ritual. It includes mention of the *shihōhai*, or "bows to the four directions," which is recorded in the *Nihonshoki* as occurring in 642 when Empress Kōgyoku performed it to bring rain. The *shihōhai* rite also has Daoist origins, showing the deep Daoist connections with the imperial house. In extending his discussion to medieval Japan, the author shows how both Eisai and Dōgen relied on the *Rules of Purity for the Zen Monastery*, which is the source of the *shukushin* ritual. While this ritual disappeared in China, it is still performed in Japan and thus presents an interesting episode on the transmission and preservation of ritual elements across cultures.

In chapter 8, "Meditation in Motion: Textual Exegesis in the Creation of Ritual," David E. Riggs looks at the practice of the slow walking (*kinhin*) of the Sōtō school and how this practice came to be considered as part of Dōgen's teaching through the rhetorical and textual efforts of the great Edo Sōtō figure Menzan Zuihō (1683–1769). He bases his discussion primarily on Menzan's *Kinhinki* and his auto-commentary, the *Kinhinki monge*.

The ritual's outstanding characteristic is the slow nature of the "walk" which is prescribed as a half step for a complete in and out breath. As the author notes, the slowness of the walk is liable to make one mistake the practitioner as standing still or "frozen in mid-step" (p. 224). As there is little in Dōgen's own writings that touch on this practice, Menzan picked up pieces scattered throughout the writings of Dōgen and attempted to buttress them by connecting them with two well-known sutras—the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* and the *Lotus Sutra*. The chapter includes ample historical background pertaining to Menzan as well as the contemporaneous currents within Edo Zen and the Sōtō school.

After the author presents a consideration of the term *kinhin*, he then examines the sources from which Menzan drew his formulation of the practice. This is followed by a complete translation of both the *Kinhinki* as

well as the *Kinhinki monge*. The author then examines the originality and meticulousness of Menzan's scholarship, which, although agenda-driven, nonetheless reveals a colossal attempt at weaving together disparate textual threads in order to justify and substantiate a ritual practice. One of the threads running through Menzan's work is the negation of the practices the Ōbaku monks had brought to Japan and that had gained currency. The Ōbaku monks applied the term *kinhin* to the act of circumambulation while reciting the name of the Buddha. Menzan's attempt to forge a connection between *kinhin* and Dōgen was a way to return to the source before the permeation of the Ming models. By feeling the need to combat the Ōbaku presence, Menzan in effect codified the practice of *kinhin* in the Sōtō school.

In the final chapter of the book, "Dharma Transmission in Theory and Practice," William M. Bodiford takes an insightful look at the issue of Dharma transmission. The context is set by a discussion at the beginning of the chapter on the Dharma Heritage Ceremony, the ceremony that concluded the first national conference of the Sōtō Zen Buddhist Association, an organization formed to facilitate communication among Sōtō priests in North America. In questioning what constitutes Dharma transmission, what roles it has played in Zen lore, history, and ritual, and what issues arise when transplanted to a foreign culture, etc., Bodiford divides his chapter into three broad themes in the hope of establishing a conceptual and historical context that will allow an informed investigation of these issues. These three are: (1) the familial ideal of Dharma transmission in East Asia, (2) the vicissitudes of Dharma transmission in the history of Sōtō Zen in Japan, and (3) issues presented by Dharma transmission in America.

The section discussing familial structure focuses on the important and perhaps underemphasized Confucian element in Zen. Citing John Jorgensen, Bodiford points out that, in terms of the clerical elite, the reason that Zen has come to be the most successful form of Buddhism in East Asia is because of Dharma transmission. In other words, it is the most Chinese form of Buddhism in that it is the closest to Confucianism. This is shown by the fact that it adheres to family values, honors its ancestors, and passes on a tradition through the generations, each of which performs "rites" to honor the preceding generations. Bodiford then isolates seven key dimensions of Chinese social norms that apply to relationships both in secular society and within Dharma lineages. These are: (1) the ancestral dimension, (2) the biological dimension, (3) the linguistic dimension, (4) the ritual dimension, (5) the legal dimension, (6) the institutional and financial dimension, and (7) the temporal dimension. As Bodiford argues, Dharma

transmission includes these dimensions within an overarching mythological framework that, united in a genealogical terminology, are revealed through actual ritual performances.

When the discussion shifts to Dharma transmission in Japanese Sōtō Zen, Bodiford again neatly provides three main points with which to consider this theme: Dharma transmission replicates Chinese family values; it conveys great spiritual power and authority; and it is inherently flexible and multidimensional (p. 269). In this section, Bodiford considers Dharma transmission from the time of Dōgen all the way to the modern period.

In the discussion on Dharma transmission issues, Bodiford considers the place of Dharma transmission in the Zen communities of North America and how it fits into a society and culture so different from the East Asian context. The issues that he thoughtfully examines in this chapter make clear the challenges to the adoption and adaptation of religion in an intercultural context.

This book presents a wealth of new research and thoughtful considerations by top scholars in the field on the central place of ritual in the Zen tradition. Not only will it doubtlessly serve as a valuable resource for scholars and students, it will hopefully encourage further investigations into the place of ritual in Zen across cultures.

Head, Eyes, Flesh, and Blood: Giving Away the Body in Indian Buddhist Literature. By Reiko Ohnuma. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. xvii + 372 pages. Hardcover $55.00/£38.00.

MATSUMURA JUNKO

This "blood-reeking," shocking-titled book, based on the author's doctoral thesis, deals with the stories in which the bodhisattva gives away part or the whole of his body, sometimes resulting in the loss of his life. The author treats these stories, generally found in the Buddhist *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* literature, as one corpus and calls them "the gift-of-the-body" stories (Skt. *ātmaparityāga*, Pāli *attapariccāga*, Ch. *sheshen*; note, however that the author does not give this technical term in the original languages). The significance of the stories on this theme and their enormous influence on the development of Buddhist thought, especially in the emphasized importance of bodhisattva ideals in the Mahayana Buddhism, has already been acknowledged and discussed by scholars like Étienne Lamotte, Hubert Durt