

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

and others (their contributions are all cited in the appendix, “Bibliography of Works Cited”). Undoubtedly, this book deals with one of the central ideas of Buddhism which has long awaited a detailed examination.

The contents of the book can be roughly divided into two parts, i.e., chapters 1 to 3, and chapters 4 to 7. In the first half of the book, the author discusses the meaning of this story-type as forming “the Gift-of-the-Body Genre,” the difference of the “ethos” of *jātaka*, and that of *avadāna*, typical plotlines of stories and their meanings, and the rhetoric peculiar to those stories. In the second half, the author treats *dāna*, or “gift,” which forms the core of the stories, examining the logic of the gift of the body in Buddhist soteriology, and its types such as pure gift or reciprocal gift. She also attempts to elucidate the relationship of the bodily gift with the ideals of kingship, sacrifice, and offering in general. In one of the appendices, the author gives a list of versions parallel to each story treated in the book. This, however, is far from being incomplete. The book also contains a seemingly endless bibliography of works the author cited in the book.

It may be legitimate for the author to call these *jātaka* stories “super-*jātakas*,” or some of the most “*jātaka*-like” *jātakas* (p. 44), when we remember that these stories are the most popular among Buddhists in all areas where Buddhism spread, and this appellation highlights the reason why they have become so popular. However, the discussion of the different meanings of *jātakas* and *avadānas* seems to be, in spite of the very detailed accounting, rather irrelevant: *Jātaka* clearly means, as is evident from the word’s etymology, stories of the former existences of the historical Buddha, or, only later, also including those of other Buddhas; while *avadāna* covers a much wider range, also including stories of the former existences of Buddha’s eminent disciples and narratives which have no direct relations with Buddha’s or his disciples’ former existences. Since the word *avadāna*, whatever discussion on its etymology is applied, is always translated as *piyu*, or parables, in Chinese, *avadāna* means an illustrative story, rather than the author’s phrase of “illustrious story or deed.” Thus, it is no wonder that *jātaka* stories can be also included in the *avadāna* collections. Although the author lays emphasis on the “ethos” peculiar to each of the two genres, she treats some of the gift-of-the-body stories by using *avadāna* collections such as the *Avadānakalpalatā*, *Avadānaśataka*, *Divyāvadāna*, etc., without any differentiation, giving the reader a somewhat confusing, contradictory impression.

In order to analyze the structure of the gift-of-the-body stories, the author also attempts to approach the topic by adopting an inter-disciplinary perspective. Especially noteworthy is her attempt to apply the famous theories

of gift-making presented by the anthropologists, such as Marcel Mauss, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and others. Although this kind of approach might arouse curiosity in general readers, the manner and the results of the comparison reveal little, and, therefore, impress one as being superfluous. The present reviewer, as a researcher in Buddhist narrative literature, hopes that those who try to analyze any Buddhist text in search of religious, social, or any other categories of significance will at least have enough knowledge of the language in which the text is written, in order to be able to read the original text as accurately as possible.

In this book, the author shows her obvious lack of knowledge of Chinese and Tibetan which are indispensable in the treatment of this kind of Buddhist literature: most of the parallel stories, which often belong to an older layer of transmitted Buddhist literature, are only extant in the Chinese Buddhist Canon, and several also in Tibetan translation. For example, the author gives a full translation of a story in the (Tibetan) *Sutra of the Wise and the Fool* (pp. 17–19), and it is obviously a translation not from the Tibetan original, but an English version from I. J. Schmidt's German translation. In the translation, a Pāli place name, Rājagaha, and the Sanskrit words, Śudolagarne (p. 18, a word unknown to the reviewer; Schmidt renders the word as Schdtolaggarni) and Jambudvīpa are used at the same time without giving any justification for doing so. Such a choice gives the impression of a lack of awareness of the history of the text that is being treated, which is essential knowledge required from a student of Buddhist literature. A basic sense of the historical and geographical facts concerning Buddhist texts is also essential, and the paucity of this knowledge or sense causes misunderstanding and may also diminish the author's achievement. The author postulates, for example, that the plotline, in which the bodhisattva restores his body by the Act of Truth or through God Śakra's power, weakens the emphasis on perfect and one-sided generosity (p. 74). However, in this kind of argument, we also have to take into account the cultural background of each story and where they originated. The Act of Truth is one of the mythological cults of which we can find many examples in non-Buddhist, classical Indian literature (one of the most famous examples is that performed by Śītā in the *Rāmāyana*), and, in the case of the hungry tigress story, *Vyāghrīātaka*, this motif never appears in any version, since this story obviously has its origin, not in the traditional Indian cultural sphere, but probably in a more northern area like Gandhāra. Or, as for the version in the *Suvarṇabhāsaśūtra*, it may even be connected with Central Asian areas. The author's confusion about the Northern and Southern versions of King

Śibi's story and also her misunderstanding of the Tigress story is a consequence of her inaccurate reading and preconceived ideas about Faxian's and Xuanzang's travel accounts (p. 2ff.). Faxian never mentioned to Prince Mahāsattva in the excerpted passage, and Xuanzang did not relate that the king who sacrificed his eyes was King Śibi. Xuanzang most surely referred to King Sudhīra's story found in the *Sutra of the Wise and the Fool*.

In spite of the shortcomings discussed above in the philological treatment of the material, the author's discussion on the Buddhist attitude towards the body is interesting and noteworthy (chapter 6). In Buddhism, the body is, on one hand, the object of contemplation through which one must discern its impurity and understand the necessity of detaching oneself from it. This is an essential step in the process of attaining deliverance from samsaric existence. However, on the other hand, the bodhisattva needs his body to practice the *pāramī/pāramitās* to attain buddhahood. This aspect may serve as an important source in the discussion of such contemporary issues as suicide, or organ donation, and, of course, the issue of the meaning and value of human life.

Hōryūji Reconsidered. Edited by Dorothy C. Wong with Eric M. Field. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008. xxii + 314 pages. Hardcover \$79.99.

ALICIA R. EAST

The publication of *Hōryūji Reconsidered* is no small feat in many regards. Scholars across disciplines have examined Hōryūji numerous times over the decades. Historical records surrounding the site, as well as the temple itself, yield only a set amount of intellectual fruit as time passes. It would seem, in the twenty-first century, that the topic has reached a point of critical mass. Yet Wong, along with Field, has compiled a collection of essays that underscores the utility of sowing ancient ground.

Hōryūji Reconsidered is comprised partly of papers given at the University of Virginia's 2005 symposium "The Dawn of East Asian International Buddhist Art and Architecture: Hōryūji (Temple of the Exalted Law) and Its Contexts" and partly of essays contributed thereafter. Much like the symposium, the book seeks to imbue the known corpus of evidence with