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the words of the Buddha," for "his own saying are at variance with themselves."<sup>7</sup> To the analytical mind of the non-Buddhist scholar Tominaga Nakamoto centuries later, this very same observation about the discrepancies between the sutras, including the *Lotus Sutra*, would lead to the conclusion that they could not all have come from the same source. For Nichiren the contradictions point out that the one true teaching of the *Lotus Sutra* stands in opposition to all the rest.

The background commentaries provided by the editors give useful information on the circumstances of each writing. The basic contents are also succinctly summarized. The information goes beyond the writings of Nichiren and includes the interpretations of Nichiren Shōshū. The most significant point centers, not surprisingly, around the personal identity of Nichiren himself. A variety of passages are taken to mean that Nichiren was the original Buddha himself. When, for example, Nichiren denies that he is the Bodhisttva Jōgyō, "superficially this seems like a mere expression of humility;" but "he is really indicating that he is the original Buddha."<sup>8</sup> In this deification of a historical person we can see another trait of Japanese Buddhism, more clearly exemplified, perhaps, in the case of Kūkai.

What we have then is a rich treasury of materials for the study of Nichiren and the Nichiren Shōshū interpretation of him. In the 118 essays and letters of Nichiren packed into more than 1,500 pages, we find the lively imagery, magical cosmology, assertive personality, compassionate caring, doctrinal condemnations, religious persecution, and mystic text of Nichiren and his Buddhism.

GEORGE J. TANABE, JR.

*DŌGEN'S MANUALS OF ZEN MEDITATION.* By Carl Bielefeldt. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989. Pp. 259. ISBN 0-520-06056-3.

This work by Bielefeldt on Dōgen's meditation manuals—the *Fukan zazen gi* ("Universal Promotion of the Principles of Seated Meditation") and three other writings—is by far the most thorough and rigorous analysis of the subject matter available thus far in Dōgen studies. Bielefeldt goes further than all others in reconstructing the historical origins of Dōgen's Zen; his revisionist

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. 1, p. 167.

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approach is in contradistinction to Sōtō sectarian ideology. The book consists of the main exposition and the translations of the meditation manuals, as well as of Dōgen's short statement, originally untitled, but now known as *Fukan zazen gi senjutsu yurai* ("On the Origin of the 'Principles of Seated Meditation'"), and the *Tso-ch'an i*, a meditation primer of the Northern Sung, by Ch'ang-lu Tsung-tse (n.d.). Bielefeldt's translations of these materials are well-researched, competent, and accurate. In what follows I will focus on the main exposition of the work.

Traditional scholars—most conspicuously, Sōtō sectarian—have generally believed that: (1) immediately upon his return from China in 1227, Dōgen composed a manual of meditation (the Karoku text now nonextant)—usually regarded as the urtext of the *Fukan zazen gi*—as the declaration of independence of his own Zen from the old schools of Japanese Buddhism; (2) later in 1233, he made a fair copy of the manual, i.e., the Tenpuku (or autograph) text, the earliest extant *Fukan zazen gi*; and finally, (3) circa 1243, he revised the Tenpuku text, thus producing the vulgate (or Kōroku) text so as to reflect his mature view of Zen which had been developed in his *Shōbōgenzō* fascicles written in the years separating these two recensions. In view of the fact that Dōgen mentions his intention of composing a meditation manual on the basis of, and by improving upon, Tsung-tse's *Tso-ch'an i*, Dōgen scholars have compared the Tenpuku version with the *Tso-ch'an i* on the one hand, and with the vulgate version, along with other manuals such as the *Shōbōgenzō zazen gi* ("Principles of Seated Meditation", 1243), the *Shōbōgenzō zazen shin* ("Lancet of Seated Meditation", 1242), and the *Bendō hō* "zazen hō" section (1245), on the other. As a result, traditional scholars have largely maintained the uniqueness of Dōgen's meditation method and teachings (i.e., *shikan taza*, "just sitting") as directly imparted by his Chinese mentor T'ient'ung Ju-ching (1163-1228).

While accepting the potential fruitfulness of historical and textual treatment of Dōgen's meditation manuals, Bielefeldt radically challenges, among other things, the validity of the foregoing traditionalist view's overall contextual assumptions. The traditionalist view construes both continuity and discontinuity with Tsung-tse strictly within the sectarian framework of Dharma transmission from Ju-ching to Dōgen, thereby isolating Dōgen's religion from its broader historical and intellectual contexts. Moreover, such a traditionalist orientation, as Bielefeldt observes, is based on the last decade or so of Dōgen's life when his strong sectarian consciousness in connection with his Chinese mentor became pronounced, and stems from Sōtō apologetics promoted in the eighteenth century by sectarian scholars, especially Menzan Zuihō (1683-1769). By contrast, Bielefeldt focuses his study on those years of about a decade and a half after Dōgen's return from China, during which time

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the aforementioned meditation manuals were written, attempting, thus, to place these writings in the context of the sudden tradition of Ch'an, from which meditation tradition both in China and Japan originated.

Consequently, Bielefeldt considers Tsung-tse's *Tso-ch'an i* in the context of the intellectual history of Buddhism, particularly of Ch'an and T'ien-t'ai in China, and of meditation texts in the Heian and Kamakura periods in Japan. He first compares Tsung-tse's work with the *T'ien-t'ai hsiao chih-kuan*, an influential sixth-century meditation primer, by T'ien-t'ai Chih-i (538-597), asserting that the former should be properly understood as a new work designed to popularize meditation in order to fill the gap left by Ch'an orthodoxy in Sung China. To elucidate this point further, Bielefeldt delineates Ch'an history, noting that, despite the promising meditation tradition of early Ch'an initiated by the seventh century Tung shan ("East Mountain") school, classical Ch'an failed to produce any meditation manual. According to Bielefeldt, this peculiar lacuna was due to the advocacy of the sudden doctrine (sudden practice/sudden enlightenment) by the Southern school of Ch'an. Ironically, this practice resulted in a self-imposed anti-meditation stance despite Ch'an's being the meditation school, and in turn made discussion of all meditation methods problematic and suspect. As for those classical centuries in which Ch'an Buddhists produced no meditation manual, and yet did practice meditation nevertheless—the golden age of Ch'an which was enormously creative and vital with respect to meditation tradition, Bielefeldt's treatment of the period, especially of the place of meditation in Ch'an life, is virtually nil; he merely relegates this peculiar phenomenon of the absence of meditation writings to a single ideological factor, i.e., what he calls the "protestant" soteriology—transcendental wisdom alone at the expense of works (meditation)—of Ch'an orthodoxy. The total effect of such analysis is tantalizingly vague. In any case, as Bielefeldt contends, given such an ideological climate, Ch'an eventually was transformed into an elitist, formalized Ch'an through its adoption of the method of *kung-an* investigation (*k'an-hua*) in the Sung. Both promises and problematics of Tsung-tse's efforts can be appreciated against such ideological forces within Sung Ch'an. The perennial ambivalence of Ch'an toward meditation, owing to its inherent dangers of transic absorption and deadly quietism, was also true of Zen in Japan, where, as Bielefeldt observes, Dōgen's contemporaries were quite familiar with the major Chinese meditation texts including Chih-i's and Tsung-tse's; some even wrote their own popular meditation guides. In view of the fact that Dōgen wrote his *Fukan zazen gi* in such a historical and intellectual milieu, the so-called uniqueness of Dōgen's meditation, insists Bielefeldt, must be drastically reassessed.

In comparing Tsung-tse's *Tso-ch'an i* and Dōgen's Tenpuku *Fukan zazen*

*gi*, Bielefeldt maintains that the middle section of the latter, which deals with practical advice on the practice of meditation, follows the former with respect to content, though greatly simplified. However, the introductory and concluding sections of the *Fukan zazen gi* clearly bear Dōgen's stamp with his own philosophical and literary characteristics, especially his proclivity to theorize about meditation. Dōgen's interpretation of meditation thus differs, as Bielefeldt sees it, from Tsung-tse's in grounding meditation theoretically in the wisdom teachings of the Ch'an sudden tradition, as well as in identifying it historically with the Ch'an patriarchal lineage: while Tsung-tse reacted to Ch'an wisdom tradition, Dōgen embraced it.

A comparison of the Tenpuku and vulgate versions of the *Fukan zazen gi* provides us with further evolution in Dōgen's view of meditation—a radicalization of the wisdom tradition of Ch'an: now purged of the slightest therapeutic and utilitarian concerns as well as those of transic concentration, meditation becomes enlightened practice (*shōjō no shu*). Regarding continuity and discontinuity between classical Ch'an and Dōgen, Bielefeldt argues that while the classical sudden view of the unity of practice and enlightenment remains constant in both, the emphasis in the revised *Fukan zazen gi* is on the ritual and ethical enactment in enlightened practice rather than on mere avoidance of deluded discrimination. The shift is from the epistemological question of recognition to the ethical issue of participation; from inward quest to outward expression; from pure consciousness to liberated action. In this respect, enlightened practice is inseparably conjoined with seated meditation. In this way, Dōgen gradually perfected his view of meditation within the ideological context of the wisdom (sudden) tradition of Ch'an.

In this connection, as he delves further into nonthinking (*hi shiryō*), one of the key notions that appear in the revised *Fukan zazen gi* text, Bielefeldt construes the term as referring to a meditation technique. In consequence, he is constricted by his historical method, so much so that his exposition on this notion is the least satisfactory in the book, as I shall spell out later. Even so, he does propose a highly suggestive view on the relation of nonthinking to *shikan taza*, arguing for the role played within the latter by *kanna* ("kōan investigation") Zen, a method regarded in Sōtō sectarian circles as belonging to the Rinzai tradition and hence incompatible with the Sōtō sect. In the final analysis, Bielefeldt sees no validity whatsoever to the Sōtō orthodox claim of the uniqueness of *shikan taza* qua technique which would make it fundamentally different from and incompatible with all other methods. By the same token, as he notes in his conclusion, such an exclusivist claim to uniqueness, when considered in the wider comparative context of Kamakura Buddhism, finds significant parallels in, for example, Shinran's and Nichiren's traditions.

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Considered in conjunction with his essay, "Recarving the Dragon: History and Dogma in the Study of Dōgen,"<sup>1</sup> Bielefeldt's present work under review is eminently indicative of his consistent and persistent efforts to reconstruct Dōgen's life and the origins of Dōgen's Zen. In this worthy scholarly enterprise, Bielefeldt has taken a nonsectarian stance—what he, somewhat self-consciously, calls "secular" and "positivistic," sharply distancing himself from sectarian apologetics. This methodological posture is salutary and welcome to the extent that it frees Dōgen's Zen from some unwholesome premises of sectarian dogmatism; and yet, it has also resulted to some extent in Bielefeldt's throwing out the baby with bath water, as it were. What is problematic with Bielefeldt's historiography, then, has primarily to do less with commissions than with omissions. What I have specifically in mind is his total dismissal from his *methodology*, for example, of the existential dimension of Dōgen's spiritual struggle and eventual enlightenment experience under Ju-ching at T'ien-t'ung—the decisive factor in Dōgen's self-definition, and a paradigmatic or mythic theme which he enacted throughout his life—as nothing but part of Sōtō hagiographic dogma, which has its origins in the latter part of Dōgen's life and which was later reinforced by eighteenth-century apologists. What Bielefeldt is in fact doing, however, is discarding not only dogma but, most importantly, myth as well. Mythic themes and historical changes interpenetrate one another so as to redeem one another. Only then can *historical* origins become genuinely and totally historical.

Germane to the foregoing observations is Bielefeldt's insistence in the present book on treating Dōgen as a meditation master, rather than as a religious thinker, and on regarding *shikan taza* as a technique, rather than as the root metaphor for Dōgen's enormously rich and complex symbolic universe. This self-imposed limitation of his procedure—ironically analogous to that of the "protestant" soteriology of orthodox Ch'an in his analysis—has fatally inhibited the author in dealing with Dōgen the thinker. The case in point is most clearly evidenced in Bielefeldt's treatment of nonthinking, whereby he unduly dichotomizes Dōgen the meditator and Dōgen the thinker, limiting himself to the narrow confines of nonthinking as a meditation technique. Consequently, he glosses over far-reaching hermeneutical implications of Dōgen's identification of meditation with nonthinking-as-authentic-thinking.

For all these strictures, we are immensely indebted to Bielefeldt for liberating Dōgen from Sōtō sectarianism, in the finest tradition of nonsectarian studies, as well as for restoring him—and Sōtō tradition for that matter—to

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<sup>1</sup> William R. LaFleur, ed., *Dōgen Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp. 21–53.

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the intellectual history of Ch'an and Zen. After all, Dōgen was, is, and will be, neither sectarian nor nonsectarian.

HEE-JIN KIM

***THE MARATHON MONKS OF MOUNT HIEI.*** By John Stevens. Shambhala, Boston, 1988. vii + 158pp., with a Bibliography, Glossary and Index. ISBN 0-87773-415-1

Long after midnight much of the year, Tendai monks dressed in white, with long and narrow bamboo hats that resemble, if anything, lotus leaves coming out of the water with their sides folded up, stop one by one high on Mt. Hiei to sit under a giant cedar overlooking Kyoto. There they pray for the safety of the emperor and world peace. They are the *gyōja*, or 'practitioners', doing the *kaihōgyō*, the 'practice' of 'circling' the 'peaks', and the subject of John Stevens' *The Marathon Monks of Mt. Hiei*.

The reader is first introduced to the life and thought of Saichō, the sympathetic 8th century founder of Tendai Buddhism in Japan. Instead of pursuing 'a career of the cloth' among the elitist priests in the capital Nara, Saichō went into retreat on Hiei, the mountain behind his hometown Sakamoto. His study of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai texts while there led to his later creating a center that was more conducive than Nara to meditation and study.

The history of the new monastery established on Mt. Hiei, the Enryakuji, is dealt with next. Kyoto had become the capital during Saichō's life. In time the custom of influential families funding their own temples on nearby Hiei—and of emperors and others becoming priests there on retiring—turned Enryakuji into a political center. Personal guards developed into small standing armies, which then, century after century, warred on Kyoto and each other. Even so, genuine religious seekers continued to come to Enryakuji. The founders of nearly all of the other Japanese Buddhist sects spent years at the Tendai mountain center. Finally, the samurai to first unite all of Japan, Oda Nobunaga, decided to break Enryakuji's military power and had it burnt to the ground by an army of 25,000 in 1571. It was rebuilt relatively soon after, but never again to more than 1/20th of its previous size.

From here Stevens passes to the religious practices in Enryakuji. Before ordination everyone must do a two-month period of training. Those priests wishing to become the abbot of an Enryakuji temple also have to take a three-year course in which there is a hundred days of *kaihōgyō* or a similarly intensive period of practice. A few then elect to do *rōzan*, to 'stay' an unbroken