

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

Jiun, Shingon monks; and Gōchō Kankai, a practitioner of the *nembutsu*, son of a Shinsbu priest and student of Tendai; all of whom Addiss would include as *zenga* artists. Addiss insists that “*Zenga* is the brushwork of leading Zen monks or occasionally of other monks and laymen who have studied Zen deeply enough to be imbued with its spirit” (p. 206), or that *zenga* is produced by “monks who have transcended individual egos” (p. 6). Thus he chooses the spiritual character of the painter as the chief criteria for defining *zenga*.

At the very least this seems presumptuous and is certainly naive. The belief that there is a direct correlation between spiritual attainments and artistic skills is highly questionable. It is, of course, extremely difficult to judge a person's spiritual attainments, especially if the literary evidence is mostly laudatory. Addiss' expansion of the meaning of *zenga* to include works by those not affiliated with Zen sects is an important point, but it also means that by the seventeenth century the construct we call *zenga* refers most clearly to a particular style of painting and certain themes. It is one style among many, often chosen by monk-artists, but not used exclusively by them, and was even practiced by those for whom there is no solid evidence of authentic spiritual achievements.

My objections to the definition of the topic and the lack of a more critical viewpoint may be regarded by some as pedantic. Certainly Addiss is not alone in presenting a romantic view of Zen and the arts and artists related to Zen. Indeed it is this idealistic view that has fascinated westerners for a long time. The book jacket includes quotations by such famous men (and ideal general readers) as John Cage and Robert Motherwell who praise Addiss' clarity, wit and concreteness. I would not disagree with them. Certainly the book is both beautiful and informative, but it broadens our knowledge without sharpening our critical understanding.

WILLA JANE TANABE

DOGEN, LA NATURALEZA DE BUDA (SHOBOGENZO), Introducción del Dr. Abe Masao. Translated and edited by Félix E. Prieto (Barcelona: Ediciones Obelisco, 1989) 178 pp.

The translation of Dōgen's major work and studies on Dōgen into Spanish is long overdue, and the Spanish painter and aficionado of Buddhism, Félix Prieto, is to be congratulated for breaking new ground. The present book contains a translation of Abe Masao's important essay, “Dōgen on Buddha-Nature,” and of the “Buddha-Nature” chapter of the *Shōbōgenzō* from the amply annotated Waddell-Abe translation originally published in the pages of

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In an opening prologue, the author makes it clear that he has undertaken the work as much out of affection for Dōgen as for Abe, whose work he characterizes as “a philosophical *summa* of the currents of thought of the ‘Kyōto School’” (p. 4) and who he says “can rightly be called the most qualified person to continue the intercultural work initiated by the illustrious figure of Suzuki” (p. 7).

Given that the figure of Dōgen is virtually unknown in Spanish translation, Prieto's selection of material is one that should please the academic world. While Buddhist scholars no doubt have access to the original languages or at least the English translations, there are many in Christian academia who have begun to take note of the rich potential of Buddhist philosophical thought and of the work of the Kyoto philosophers in particular. Add to that Abe's well-deserved reputation as a promoter of Buddhist-Christian encounter in the Christian West, and the project only grows in importance. Abe's own introductory comments end with the hope that this work will contribute to mutual understanding among people East and West, and to the new and wider spiritual horizon of our times that make this necessary.

The translation itself is stiff in that it follows the English text tit-for-tat, but as far as I was able to check, it is faithful. I see no reason why it cannot be cited with confidence.

There are, however, not a few technical difficulties with the production, suggesting that it may have been rushed to press without proper preparation. To begin with, librarians will find it hard to decide author and title. The information on the cover, the title page, and the copyright page are all different. And none of them indicate that fully half the book is taken up with Abe's essay, for which precise bibliographical information is lacking. The use of diacritical marks is confusing. Dōgen is given the macron on the copyright page, but the *Shōbōgenzō* is not. Throughout the rest of the book, the same inconsistency persists. In a briefly annotated opening bibliography, the author complains of the first entry that it contains “abundant typographical errors.” I counted nine typographical errors on those two pages alone, beginning with the title of the entry against which the complaint was lodged. The pace lets up later, but there are too many mistakes that a competent proofreader would have caught. The romanization of the long Japanese phrase on p. 20 is misprinted, the Chinese characters (otherwise correct, but often simply left out or barely readable) are missing on p. 46, the typesetting of the first paragraph on p. 128 is deformed, and a phrase is repeated on p. 136. One would have thought Abe's important work deserved better.

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