

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Tendai Buddhism: Collection of the Writings by Bruno Petzold.* Published by the International Buddhist Exchange Center, Yokohama, 1979. 430pp.

Bruno Petzold's scattered writings on Tendai Buddhism and more generally on Japanese Buddhism have been valued by their readers for many years, and it is extremely helpful of the International Buddhist Exchange Center to bring some of them together in one volume commemorating his almost forty years of engagement with Japanese Buddhism. An interesting biographical postscript by Hanayama Shinshō records that Petzold studied Tendai teachings under the guidance of Professor Shimaji Daitō of Tokyo University from the spring of 1912, shortly after his arrival in Japan, until Shimaji's death in 1927. Petzold himself wrote an extensive obituary of Shimaji (pp. 368–92) which provides a most interesting portrait of him as a man with one foot in the world of temples and religious doctrine and one foot in the world of scholarship. After Shimaji's death Petzold was further guided in his studies by Hanayama Shinshō, to whom Shimaji had entrusted this responsibility. In recognition of his scholarly work the Tendai Sect ordained Petzold at the Kaneiji Temple in Tokyo in 1928 and conferred upon him the high priestly rank of Dai Sōzu, adding to his name the Buddhist name Tokushō. Twenty years later he was promoted to Sōjō. It was an honour never before bestowed upon a European.

According to Hanayama, Petzold could not read Japanese or Chinese himself, and if this is true it must have some effect on the way in which his writings are appraised. It is indeed difficult to imagine a German scholar staying in Japan for forty years without making a serious effort to understand the writing system, particularly if his objective was to understand the concepts enshrined in scriptures such as the Lotus Sutra and the writings of Chih-i (Tendai Daishi). On the other hand Hanayama quotes Petzold as saying he wished to organize the necessary materials in the light of the European way of thinking, as indeed Tendai Daishi had done in Chinese without any knowledge of Sanskrit. If so, it must be said that this objective is scarcely achieved in any systematic sense in the present volume. While the work is of great interest in various respects, there is a very real difficulty as to just what status can be ascribed to any particular statement. Is it a direct textual exposition, is it a teaching from a specific historical context explained by scholarly mentors, is it the expression of the religious consciousness of the Tendai monastic community, or is it one of Petzold's personal extrapolations into the European way of thinking?

There is much of great value in the collection however. The opening essay is of particular importance as a concise and systematic account of the Chinese Tendai teaching as perceived in Japan. Such accounts are still extremely rare, but not only that, Petzold succeeds in conveying almost architecturally the

## THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

correlations between the five periods of the Buddha's teaching, the four methods, the four principles, and the three truths, communicating that strangely powerful combination of meditation and intellection so characteristic of Mahayana Buddhism. This opening article was first delivered as a lecture at the German Embassy and first printed in 1929. It would be most interesting to know just at what stage in his studies Petzold wrote it, and when the lecture was given, but unfortunately the editors give no date for this.

Readers interested in Japanese Buddhism will find many other parts of the book both helpful and stimulating. Pages 135-65, for example, give a more detailed account of Saichō's life and work than is elsewhere available in English, to which may be added a second account printed on pages 304-17. Pages 106-32 provide a narrative account of the institution of the *kokubunji*, based on de Visser's invaluable but unreadable work. Since the various articles do not appear to have been edited for this volume we have the advantage of reading what Petzold wrote, apart from misprints, and what he knew at the time. This means however that some caution should be exercised by readers who are fairly new to the field. For example, the analysis of Japanese sects on pages 76-7 could not really be said to be an authoritative picture. The Nichiren Sect is different from the Hokke Sect, and there are others too which trace their allegiance to Nichiren. The reader should remember that the very latest information in the book is more than thirty years old.

The number of misprints is unfortunately not small. Some will be very mystifying for readers, as when they read of "the secret and the undermined" on page 11 instead of "the secret and the undetermined," or of "Ich Dai Jō" instead of "Ichi Dai Jo" no less than three times on pages 89-90. To use the word "loose" for "lose" (page 75) is a common error made by Germans using English, but this is only one of many Germanisms which sometimes add character but more often mar the style. The most persistent is a use of commas which is based on German rules but which is not appropriate in English. There really should have been a native English editor who is competent in the field, and also, of course, a native English proof-reader. Such matters are a small but vital aspect of communication.

Probably the greatest value of the volume is as a document of one man's extended personal encounter with Buddhism in Japan. There are many reflections and comments on the Japanese Buddhism of his time, especially in the latter part of the article entitled "Characteristics of Japanese Buddhism" (pages 222-238) in which he describes and comments on the emergence of a specifically Japanese Buddhist consciousness. Particularly striking is his plea for Buddhism to be aware of its own international dimension and non-racial character. This is set out in a piece entitled "Buddhism and Extremism," first published in 1934,

## BOOK REVIEWS

which also contains a clear and scathing rejection of the fashionable Nazism of the time. It is to Petzold's lasting credit that as a German living in Japan throughout the thirties and the war years he clearly resisted attempts to harness religious ideas to aggressive and destructive ends. In this way he displayed a grasp of the universalist implications of Buddhism going far beyond historical exposition alone.

The exploration of Buddhist tradition today by the western world is based on greater resources and opportunities which have gradually been opened up by the pioneer work of dedicated individuals such as Bruno Petzold. While more precisely documented studies are gradually becoming available, it is a privilege for readers today, with the help of this commemorative volume, to be able to look over the shoulders of a cultural explorer from a previous generation.

MICHAEL PYE

Trevor Leggett, *Zen and the Ways*. Routledge & Kegan Paul and Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1978. 258 pp. with Appendices and Index.

There has been a growing interest in Eastern thought throughout the world in the last few decades, most notably in Europe and North America. The interest in Zen Buddhism, in particular, is so strong as to constitute a kind of fad, a "Zen boom." I had a chance to observe something of this phenomenon firsthand during several recent visits to Europe and the United States, including a period spent as visiting professor at an American college. I would like to relate some of my personal impressions of this Western preoccupation with Zen to provide an indication of the significance of the book under review.

In 1978, during one of my trips to the United States, I came across a copy of Harvey Cox's *Turning East: The Promise and Peril of the New Orientalism* (New York, 1977). I later met Professor Cox himself while visiting Harvard University. He invited me to his home, and thus I had the opportunity to discuss with him personally the question of why American youth are so enamored of Zen. Based on this conversation and my own firsthand observations, I arrived at the following conclusions.

American youth have personally experienced the alienation of a highly developed technological society. Faced with the Vietnam War and the confused state of affairs in Southeast Asia that followed it, they have lost faith in politics as a whole. Feeling like cogs in the mammoth machine of a controlled, rationally-oriented society, they have begun to revolt against the standards of modern civilization and are desperately seeking a way to spiritual freedom. Traditional