Kimura Kiyotaka 木村清孝, *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku*『正法眼蔵』全巻解読 [Deciphering the *Shōbōgenzō* Fascicles]. Tokyo: Kōsei Shuppan, 2015. 568 pp. ISBN: 978-4-333-02719-4, 3800 ¥.

Reviewed by Eitan Bolokan

Kimura Kiyotaka 木村清孝 (b. 1940), abbot of the Sōtō temple Ryūhōji 龍寶寺 in Kanagawa prefecture, Professor Emeritus at Tokyo University and former President of the Sōtō-affiliated Tsurumi University, is one of Japan's leading scholars of "The Flower Ornament School" of Mahāyāna Buddhism (Jp. 華厳宗 *Kegonshū*) and a specialist in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (Jp. *Kegonkyō*) that represents its core teaching.

Kimura's numerous publications provide us with an ongoing consideration of the philosophy of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and its place in the formation of Chinese Buddhism. His early work, "A Study of Avataṃsaka Philosophy in Early China" (*Shoki Chūgoku Kegon shisō no kenkyū*, 初期中国華厳思想の研究, Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1977), paved the path to pivotal later publications such as "A History of Chinese Buddhist Philosophy" (*Chūgoku bukkyō shisōshi*, 中国仏教思想史, Tokyo: Sekai seiten kankō kyōkai, 1979), "A History of Chinese Avataṃsaka Philosophy" (*Chūgoku Kegon shisōshi*, 中国華厳思想史, Heirakuji-shoten, 1992), "The Basic Framework of East-Asian Buddhist Philosophy" (*Higashi ajia bukkyō shisō no kisōkōzō*, 東アジア仏教思想の基礎構造, Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2001), and "A Path to Awakening: Studying the Avataṃsaka Sutra" (*Satori he no michi: Kegonkyō ni manabu*, さとりへの道：華厳経に学ぶ, NHK, 2014).

A Sōtō priest himself, Kimura has written extensively on the thought of the founder of the Japanese Sōtō School, Zen Master Eihei Dōgen 永平道元 (1200–53), and its affinity to the philosophy of the *Avataṃsaka*. Kimura's latest publication, the voluminous study titled *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku*『正法眼蔵』全巻解読 [Deciphering the *Shōbōgenzō* Fascicles], presents us with his lifelong consideration of Dōgen's philosophy. This is a massive collection with careful reflections providing many meaningful observations of Dōgen's Zen.

In the introduction to *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku*, Kimura provides a detailed presentation of the various editions of the *Shōbōgenzō* and their editorial process throughout the centuries. Kimura maintains that by focusing

on the 75-fascicle edition (*nanajūgo kanbon* 七十五巻本) and Dōgen's late writings in the 12-fascicle edition of the *Shōbōgenzō* (*jūni kanbon* 十二巻本), one can attain a holistic understanding of Dōgen's philosophy. To these Kimura adds what he considers as "Dōgen's preliminary exposition of the Dharma" (*Dōgen no saisho no honkaku tekina seppō* 道元の本格的な説法, 20), the *Bendōwa* essay from 1231 ("A Talk on the Wholehearted Way", 弁道話), and the two fascicles "Bodaisatta shishōbō" ("Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance", 菩提薩埵四摂法) and "Hokke-ten-hokke" ("Dharma Blossoms Turn Dharma Blossoms", 法華転法華). Kimura maintains that these latter fascicles are crucial as they reflect Dōgen's appreciation of the *Lotus Sūtra* and the Mahāyāna path as a whole (*hokkekyō-kan to daijō-kan wo tanteki-ni arawasu* 法華経観と大乗観を端的に表す, 20). Kimura's primary source for his analysis is the *Shōbōgenzō* collection edited and annotated by Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Iwanami Bunkō, 1990–1993, 4 vols.).

Here it should be noted that Kimura's editorial orientation seems to follow traditionalist Sōtō hermeneutics (*dentō shūgaku* 伝統宗学), which focus on the 75 and 12-fascicles editions of the *Shōbōgenzō* as the fundamental and authoritative scripture for engaging Dōgen's thought. Nevertheless, Kimura acknowledges the indispensability of a close reading of the sermons contained in the *Eihei-Kōroku* (*Eihei [Dōgen's] Extensive Record* 永平広録), as a complimentary source that is vital for appreciating Dōgen's Zen.

Additionally, in the introduction, Kimura explains his decision not to include a discussion of the "Shōji" fascicle ("Birth and Death", 生死), as he finds it to be straightforward in both articulation and meaning (*taihen wakariyasuku shitashimiyasui koto* 大変分かりやすく親しみやすいこと, 20). This is an intriguing declaration, as the fascicle is known to be a cardinal source for Dōgen's presentation of complex themes of birth and death, impermanence, and their relevance to actual practice. Of course, these themes are discussed in other fascicles, but excluding "Shōj"i is somewhat bewildering, especially since pioneering traditionalist commentators such as Nishiari Bokusan 西有穆山 (1821–1910), Kishizawa Ian 岸沢惟安 (1865–1955), and Okada Gihō 岡田宜法 (1882–1961) have stressed its significance.

This brings us to a consideration of Kimura's hermeneutical stance, which he defines in terms of a "personal interpretation" (*shige* 私解). This, he maintains, enables the reader access to a definite and concise explanation

(*ittei no hairyo* 一定の配慮, 20) to each of the various fascicles of the *Shōbōgenzō*. Kimura's methodology brings to mind the classical commentary, *A Personal Account of the Shōbōgenzō* (*Shōbōgenzō shiki* 正法眼蔵私記), compiled by the eighteenth-century Sōtō scholar monk Zakke Zōkai 雑華蔵海 (1730–1788). Zōkai's work was one of the first to introduce what we think of today as a "participatory inquiry" (*sankyū* 参究) into Dōgen's writings or a personal account of one's reading of the theological treasury of the tradition based on the wisdom acquired by ongoing practice. Nonetheless, while most of the *sankyū* literature was confined to the scholastics within the Sōtō establishment, Kimura's commentary aims at informing and enriching anyone who wishes to deepen his understanding of Dōgen. In this regard, *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku* exemplifies the manner in which traditionalist literature found its path to the non-specialist reader, who views Dōgen as a towering figure of thought and creativity, and not only as the founder of a religious school (*kaiso* 開祖).

Kimura's presentation and analysis of the various fascicle is indeed useful and concise. Kimura clarifies the historical context and significance of each fascicle, and goes on to discuss the vital aspects that characterize it. Reading through Kimura's explanation to such pivotal fascicles as "Genjōkōan" ("Actualizing the Fundamental Point" 現成公案), "Busshō" ("Buddha Nature" 仏性), "Uji" ("Being-Time" 有時), and many more, I felt that he succeeded in creating a rich and useful collection of illuminating commentaries regarding the various fascicles. Nevertheless, I found little in the actual informative content that is not known to anyone who is acquainted with the vast literature on Dōgen within Japanese and Western academia.

I then turned to examining the ways in which Kimura's authority as a leading specialist of the *Avataṃsaka* is reflected in his analysis of those fascicles that have a close affinity to the philosophy of the Kegon School. In his study of the "Kai'in Zanmai" fascicle ("Ocean Mudra Samādhi" 海印三昧), Kimura offers a detailed explanation of the philological opening to the essay by showing how Dōgen's quotes are taken from the record of the Chan Master Mǎzǔ Dàoyī 馬祖道一(709–788), who himself quotes from the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*. Hence, Kimura maintains that Dōgen's unique understanding of the very concept of the "Ocean Mudra Samādhi" is derived from the specific Chan literature of the Tang dynasty (88–89).

Not only does Kimura's analysis clarify these various philological issues, it also focuses on the *Avataṃsaka* philosophical significance for the formation of Dōgen's Zen. For example, Kimura proposes that according to Dōgen, the meaning of the very concept "Ocean Mudra Samādhi" is the totality of *samādhi* achieved by all the Buddhas and Patriarchs (*subete no busso no zanmai* すべての仏祖の三昧). This is *samādhi* which is no other than the awakened activity and comportment of all Buddhas and Patriarchs (*busso tachi no arayuru katsudō* 仏祖たちのあらゆる活動, 90).

Another intriguing observation by Kimura regarding the significance of this *samādhi*, is that Dōgen did not confine it to the categories of meditative states. Quite to the contrary, Dōgen understood this *samādhi* as a cosmological designation that points to the dynamic manifestation of all of reality (*shuhō no araware* 衆法の現れ, 91). In this way, Kimura shows that the "Ocean Mudra Samādhi" is a designation of actual practice, but also a cosmological designation of the workings of all of reality. It is both the inconceivable dynamics of all phenomena and the particular practice of the ancestors. In fact, Kimura claims that these dialectics show the affinity between the Zen Schoo'sl cardinal concept of the "Mind Seal" (*shinnin* 心印) and the Kegon "Ocean Mudra Samādhi" (91–92).

Kimura presents similar philological inspections of the "Sangai Yuishin" ("The Three Realms are Nothing but Mind" 三界唯心) fascicle, which is also deeply connected to the *Avataṃsaka* philosophy. Here, Kimura focuses on the famous opening statements of the fascicle attributed to Shakyamuni Buddha, and discusses the difficulty in locating their textual sources. Interestingly, Kimura claims that Dōgen's familiarity with the various scriptures associated with the *Avataṃsaka* can be traced to the writings of the Sòng dynasty Sōtō Master Tóuzǐ Yìqīng 投子義青 (Jp. Tosu Gisei, 1032–1083), who was a great scholar of the sūtra. These remarks are eye-opening as they serve as further examples of the scale in which Dōgen's Zen not only bears close affinity to the Tendai and Chan Schools, but also to other pivotal Mahāyāna traditions that need to be taken into account when considering its teachings.

This said, while the *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku* does provide many such intriguing and relevant insights, I do find it falling short of reaching its full potential. Considering the fact that Kimura is both a leading scholar in the field of *Avataṃsaka* studies and in the field of Dōgen's studies, the current work could have served as a milestone achievement in both fields by

providing us with a study that only few can present within both Japanese and Western academia. What is the philosophical affinity between the *Avataṃsaka* and the *Shōbōgenzō*? What are the ideas and terminologies so pivotal to the Kegon Shcool that are reflected in Dōgen's own vocabulary and poetic imagery? In the current work, these and many more long-awaited questions are left, for the most part, untouched. It is true that Kimura notes that his work is the fruit of a lifelong study of Dōgen's Zen, and does not propose a study of the Kegon influences on Dōgen, yet I still cannot but feel that the current work did not attain its full potential.

The subject of the *Avataṃsaka* and its influence on Dōgen's Zen has long been discussed within Japanese academia and Sōtō scholarship. Important works, such as Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄 and Ueyama Shunpei's 上山春平 "Unlimited World-View: Kegon" (*Mugen no sekaikan: Kegon* 無限の世界観：華厳, Tokyo: Kadokawa, 1969) and Yoshizu Yoshihide's 吉津宜英 "A Historical Study of the Philosophy of Kegon-Zen" (*Kegon Zen no shisōshiteki kenkyū* 華厳禅の思想史的研究, Tokyo: Daitō, 1985), have presented a careful analysis of this complex theme. Kimura himself, in an article from 2003 titled "Kegon and Zen" (*Kegon to Zen* 華厳と禅, The Bulletin of the Research Institute of Zen of Aichigakuin University, vol. 31, 1–12), has discussed the ways in which the Kegon's cardinal paradigm of the "Four Dharma Realms" (*shihōkai* 四法界) are reflected in Zen literature and Dōgen's thought. The absence of such a discussion in most of the current work is indeed apparent.

In conclusion, *Shōbōgenzō zenbon kaidoku* is an impeccable presentation of the various fascicles of the *Shōbōgenzō* that will serve as an illuminating and useful commentary for anyone looking for a concise, well thought, and carefully analyzed investigation of Dōgen's philosophy.

Mark Ravina, *Understanding Japan: A Cultural History*. The Great Courses, Smithsonian Institution, 2015. Audio discs + 1 course guidebook #833212 (VI, illustrations), 176 pp. ISBN: 978-1629971827, $29.95.

Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux

Japan has a rich, complex and dynamic culture that has fascinated Western visitors for over five centuries. Many Westerners have a popular image of Japan: Mount Fuji, the hustle and bustle of Tokyo, the vibrant nightlife of its major cities, its beautiful gardens, shrines, and temples, and the magnificence of its rich food culture. At the same time, however, few people are aware of the core values that make up Japan's complex culture. We are therefore fortunate to have a masterpiece prepared by Emory University's highly respected Japanologist, Mark Ravina, *Understanding Japan: A Cultural History*, part of a series produced by The Great Courses Company.

I have long been a great fan of work of The Great Courses (TGC). TGC has created a vast quantity of intellectually stimulating "courses" covering a wide range of material. They hire a known expert in the field to give 24 thirty-minute lectures on matters pertaining to the course topic. These lectures are copied onto CDs and are available in any quality library. Over the past several years I have "taken" a good number of these "courses" centering on nineteenth century American and European history with a focus on such topics as the causes of the American Revolution and the Civil War, Victorian England, American painters in France, and so on. Therefore, when I found Ravina's course on Japanese culture in our local town library, I grabbed it with relish.

Ravina is one of the most highly regarded Japan specialists of his generation. He holds a PhD from Stanford University and is a Professor of History at Emory University where he has taught since 1991. He has been a visiting professor at Kyoto University's Institute for Research in Humanities and a research fellow at Keio University in Tokyo and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies. His books include *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigo Takamori* and *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan*. He proves himself to be a superb lecturer is highly qualified to teach such a TGC course, as Ravina's presentation is smooth and highly articulate. His points are clear, and he makes use of solid examples using everyday matters, which even those with limited knowledge of Japan can fully appreciate. Yet, he also provides a wealth of information and

interpretation that will inspire other Japan specialists. Ravina has his own carefully thought out theories on the flow of Japanese history that I have not fully considered before, and he has even inspired me to reorganize and restyle my next course on Japanese history and culture.

He begins his course with a look at Japan's place in world history. When a young Ito Hirobumi, later Japan's first and most famous prime minister, first visited the United States as part of a delegation of Japanese notables visiting the nation in 1871, he made special note of Japan's having just emerged from a long history of isolation. Ravina comments that Japan's relationship to the outside world goes in cycles between extensive assimilation and seclusion. There have been three periods of Japanese openness to outside influences: the inflow of Chinese and Korean culture centered before and during the Nara Period, the second period of intense globalization between 1300 and 1600 and the third period, which began with the opening of Japan in 1853–1854 and continued with the Meiji Restoration period (1868–1912). In particular, Ravina makes an interesting point that even during times of seclusion such as the reign of the Tokugawa *shogunate* (1600–1868) Japan continued to be influenced by outside forces. Late Tokugawa era painters like Hokusai, for example, may not have ever met a Western *gaijin,* but their art was greatly influenced by trends in European art that made their way into Japan, such as the use of perspective.

Ravina's lectures are arranged chronologically. He starts with a glance at primitive history and takes off with an in-depth analysis of historical myths about the founding of the imperial Japanese state over fifteen hundred years ago. Ravina comments on what these myths tell us about the way in which Japanese then and now see themselves and their unique place in the world. We then see the rise of the early Ritsuryo state, the arrival and acute political importance of early Buddhism in Japan, and the decline of the strong centered imperial state during the heyday of the effete Heian Court culture that collapsed in the twelfth century.

The most interesting and best taught part of the "course" focuses on the time between the collapse of the Heian imperial court and the end of the Tokugawa *shogunate*. Lectures here include the emergence of *samurai* in medieval Japan, the rise of *samurai* culture during the Ashikaga *shogunate* (1336-1573), and the growth of popular Buddhism in the guise of the Pure Land faith together with the emergence of Zen Buddhism. Ravina contrasts Japan's open period of globalization from the 1200s to about 1600 which included the Mongol invasions of the late 1200s and Hideyoshi's failed invasion of Korea and China at the end of the 1500s to the isolationist

tendencies of the Tokugawa shoguns who ruled Japan for two and a half centuries.

Ravina's lectures on early modern Japan include well-developed discourses on such things as Japanese gardens, Hokusai and the art of woodblock prints, Japanese theatre: noh and kabuki, and Japanese poetry and the evolution of the haiku poem. I am especially fond of several beautiful gardens in Kyoto, especially the gardens at the Silver Pavilion in late autumn with their wealth of woodland walks and red maples. Ravina does a fine job explaining how this and other gardens, many of them in the Kyoto area, fit as examples of Japanese aesthetics as well as expressions of Japanese religious and cultural ideals. One will also enjoy Ravina's lively comparison of noh and kabuki. Noh was very special in its aesthetic refinement and its appeal to Japan's educated and wealthy elite and Kabuki's licentious appeal to Japan's huge commoner classes.

By far the weakest part of the "course" involves Ravina's presentation of Japanese history from the Meiji period to the present. The lecture on the Meiji Restoration period describes the many reforms and intense modernization of Japan as a synthesis of traditional Japan (such as the "restoration" of imperial rule) with new modern tendencies (such as the writing of a modern constitution). However, there is little mention of the critical leveling of social classes, which on occasion gave opportunities for children of commoner families to rise up through their own abilities without the restrictions of class – typified by Fukuzawa Yukichi's famous quote: "Heaven helps those who help themselves." There is little mention of the importance of universal education and the use of *oyatoi gaikokujin,* teachers and experts from the West, who played a key role in launching Japan's modernization. Ravina needs to mention that the Meiji experiment was a true "Revolution from Above" that forever changed Japan.

Ravina's analysis weakens in the explanation of Japan's history between the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) and Pearl Harbor. There is little mention of the tensions in Japanese society in the 1920s and early 1930s as the nation's elite grew wealthier while the gap between them and the common tenant farmer and the poorly paid and abused factory worker grew greater and greater. That led to the rise of a uniquely Japanese form of fascism fashioned by such writers as Kita Ikki that influenced radical young circles among officers in the Japanese military and abetted their aborted coup in late February 1936. Kita and others in the military asserted a new form of Asian nationalism which pushed the idea that Japan should become the architect of a new order in Asia.

Ravina repeatedly describes the Japanese incursions into China and the creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo in the 1930s, but he never clearly explains *why* Japan wanted to invade Manchuria and China in the first place? Why did Japan take Korea, then Manchuria, and then invade China?

His commentary on the road to Pearl Harbor also is problematical. He uses the writing of the late Japanese political scientist Maruyama Masao who stated that Japan in the 1930s and early 1940s failed to develop a coherent plan for war and conquest. The result was that Japan stumbled lamely from one crisis to another getting deeper and deeper into a quagmire in China from which it could not extricate itself. Ravina also fails to remind us that oil was the key cause of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt's oil and scrap iron embargo cut off sales of vital oil to Japan. Japan had a hard choice: capitulation and withdrawal from China and Southeast Asia or the launching of an attack to gain control of Dutch Indonesia and its huge oil reserves – with an attack on Pearl Harbor to prevent the American fleet from blocking Japan's vital ocean lanes to Southeast Asia.

Furthermore, Ravina's lectures on postwar Japan are mixed. There is virtually no mention of the importance of the Allied occupation of Japan. What is the legacy of this critical period of Japanese history? On the other hand, Ravina's explanation of Japan's rise to economic dominance in the 1970s and 1980s and the collapse of this boom period in the 1990s is excellent. Included in this section is a fascinating analysis of the Japanese family since the Heian period and a gourmet's delightful presentation on the extensive world of Japanese food. Included here is a worthy explanation of why Japan has twice or more times the restaurants the U.S. has – Japanese apartments and homes are so small and so cluttered that it is often more economical and worthwhile to eat and entertain out rather than at home. There is also a valuable analysis of Japan's two great modern movie directors – Ozu Yasujirō and Kurosawa Akira. Ravina's closing comments on Japan's progress since the economic bubble of the 1990s are very worthwhile. He suggests that Japan is today entering a period of self-imposed isolation, noting the drastic decline of Japanese traveling abroad and the decreased numbers of Japanese students studying abroad. The comment on students is especially apt – we had up to twenty Japanese students each year through the 1990s from our various sister schools in Japan, but only five or six in 2017.

Despite these criticisms, Ravina's *Understanding Japan: A Cultural History* is a remarkable resource. The course provides the teacher with only twelve hours in which to cover the full breadth and length of Japanese history. The focus of the "course," as the title suggests, is on Japanese culture, not

history, although the two are intertwined. The best lectures are on aspects of traditional culture such as gardens, Buddhism, traditional theatre, Tokugawa art, and various forms of Buddhism and their role in Japanese society. There is a fascinating but rather highbrow analysis of Japanese language that will thrill the specialist but may well lose listeners with little background in Japanese studies.

One cannot include everything in a very short "course" such as this, but I missed not hearing anything about Nichiren and Nichiren Buddhism, the only form of Buddhism native to Japan. There is no mention of the New Religions such as Soka Gakkai which are so important in contemporary Japan. Similarly, how can one describe the Meiji period without any mention of Fukuzawa Yukichi? There could be a lecture on modern Japanese literature with at least mention of Natsume Sōseki and his novel *Kokoro*, Dazai Osamu's *Setting Sun* as well as a host of modern writers.

Overall, the visual aspect of the course is incredibly valuable. The Smithsonian Institution cooperated with the production of this course, which included beautiful and often stunning illustrations from the Smithsonian's expansive collection of Japanese artwork and archival material. Despite these minor criticisms, Ravina's presentation of Japanese culture and history is a very rich and perceptive view of this enigmatic nation. There is enough here to enthrall the newcomer and to energize the specialist, and Ravina should be congratulated on his masterful achievement.

Matt Goulding, *Rice, Noodle, Fish: Deep Travels through Japan's Food Culture.* New York: HarperCollins, 2015. 352 pp. ISBN: 978-0062394033, $37.50.

Reviewed by Steven E. Gump

What would an English-language love letter to Japanese cuisine, in monograph form, by an American food and travel writer not fluent in Japanese, look like? Might it opine on seasonality, connoisseurship, regionalism and the Japanese sense of *terroir*, the bounty of the land (ocean, waterways, forest, orchard, rice paddy), and the years of training and perfectionism that epitomize culinary practice? Might it offer mouthwatering photographs and amatory textual descriptions of both multicourse feasts and individual dishes or ingredients, sublime in their essential perfection? Might

it attempt to use Japanese culture as an explanation for all that is unique and wonderful and rhapsodic about the food and foodways of this island nation? And might it be thoughtfully designed and produced, as if embodying the depth of its affection?

If such is your idea of a *billet-doux* to Japanese cuisine, you can well imagine Matt Goulding's *Rice, Noodle, Fish: Deep Travels through Japan's Food Culture*. The first in an ongoing series of Roads & Kingdoms books endorsed by none other than the late celebrity chef, food writer, and adventurer Anthony Bourdain – the second is *Grape, Olive, Pig* (2016), Goulding's similarly indulgent take on food in Spain – as *Rice, Noodle, Fish* seems geared toward the twenty-first-century reader who craves detail about food in context and also appreciates sound bites and listicles. The language is hip, befitting an author who was formerly an editor at *Men's Health* magazine; yet the book leaves an overall pleasant impression about the power of food and foodways to serve as windows into the very soul of a people. Goulding would undoubtedly agree with epicure Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755–1826), who wrote in his 1825 *Physiologie du gôut*, "Dis-moi ce que tu manges: je te dirai ce que tu es" (Tell me what you eat: I will tell you what you are).

Seven geographically focused chapters, each approximately 45 pages, form the heart of the book: Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Hokkaido, and the Noto Peninsula. For readers familiar with Japanese cuisine, chapters include commentaries on the expected: Tokyo, on the Tsukiji fish market and the sheer number of restaurants (300,000 versus the mere 30,000 of New York City); Osaka, on *okonomiyaki*, *takoyaki*, and "informal" food; Kyoto, on formal *kaiseki* cuisine; Fukuoka, on *tonkotsu* (pork-broth) ramen and outdoor food stands called *yatai*; Hiroshima, on *okonomiyaki* (a different style from that in Osaka); Hokkaido, on seafood; and the Noto Peninsula, jutting into the Sea of Japan, on fermented and foraged foods. Indeed, this book is not one to be read on an empty stomach.

Each chapter goes deeper, as the subtitle accurately suggests. Throughout the book, Goulding profiles individuals – sometimes unexpected ones – in search for the essence of the *shokunin* 職人. Goulding explains: "The concept of *shokunin*, an artisan deeply and singularly dedicated to his or her craft, is at the core of Japanese culture" (6). One master of grilled chicken (yes, specialization is an important component of the *shokunin* approach) in

Tokyo, who has earned a Michelin star, "embodies the qualities that all *shokunin* share: unwavering focus, economy of motion, disarming humility, and a studied silence that never betrays the inner orchestra his life's work inspires" (21). Goulding displays tremendous respect and even awe for the artisans he profiles, perhaps occasionally forgetting that similarly disciplined experts exist in various manifestations around the world. Unexpected profiles include those of a 101-year-old coffee shop owner in Tokyo, a Guatemalan-born *okonomiyaki* chef in Hiroshima, and an Australian-born *ryokan* (Japanese-style inn) owner and Italian-fusion chef on the Noto Peninsula.

Conspicuously absent is any substantive discussion of gender. If Goulding's sampling is representative, rare is the female Japanese chef: men dominate the public food scene in Japan. (Conversely, though unmentioned, women dominate Japan's domestic and institutional – think school cafeterias, for example – food world). Two of the Osakan proprietors Goulding mentions are women, and they fall at opposite ends of the spectrum: one makes dumplings, and the other hosts guests at an *ichigen-san okotowari* (invitation-only restaurant). But Osaka is more relaxed, more *real*, its own world. Wives, though, are unilaterally important; they stand by, supporting and assisting their chef-husbands, who receive the limelight and the accolades. Japanese wives, in fact, play a prominent role in Goulding's portrayals of both the Guatemalan *okonomiyaki* chef and the Australian *ryokan* owner and chef.

In addition to the awe and respect he affords *shokunin*, Goulding demonstrates appreciation verging on wonder for the seasonality and regionalism of Japanese cuisine as well as for the concept of *mottainai*, the abhorrence of waste. But love has its ups and downs: "Not everything is so beautiful in Tokyo" or anywhere else in Japan, for that matter (25). Goulding's chapter on Hiroshima includes feelings of regret and guilt (obligatory for Americans?); he refers to *okonomiyaki*, sometimes described in English as a "thick, savory pancake" (55), as "the second most famous thing that ever happened to Hiroshima" (188). He even expresses concern for the future – particularly the future of marine life – in his chapter on Hokkaido: "one can't help but get the sense that if the Japanese preserved ecosystems as carefully as they preserve tradition, the future of the fishing industry might not look so grim" (252). These emotions Goulding navigates deftly,

contributing to the feeling that he realizes the essentializing that occurs throughout the book.

Less clear are certain elements of Goulding's method, particularly the original language of any of the quotations offered, although some of the Japanese individuals profiled can presumably speak English. Goulding acknowledges a frequent reliance on "guides" and "hosts," whom I imagine functioned as translators and interpreters, yet these individuals are often absent from the episodes recounted. Even in journalism one can unobtrusively articulate the filters of translation, so I would worry if undergraduate students were to replicate this linguistically ambiguous style in their academic work. Sprinkled throughout are various history lessons in miniature, most of which do no harm. Goulding shares the story of William S. Clark (1826–86) of Massachusetts, who came to Hokkaido in 1876 and established the Sapporo Agricultural College (now Hokkaido University), returning to the USA with this famous parting epigram: "Boys, be ambitious!" He describes the transfer of Japan's capital from Naniwa (Osaka) to Asuka to Nara to Heian (Kyoto) to Edo (Tokyo). He further explores the forced assimilation of the Ainu in Hokkaido without, remarkably, drawing a parallel to the plight of Native American Indians. Goulding does mistakenly refer to funerals in Japan as "Shinto ceremon[ies]" (283), offering that rationale as explanation for why funeral food on the Noto Peninsula is vegetarian. In fact, death in the Shintō worldview is polluting, so Japanese funerals are typically Buddhist affairs (hence the vegetarianism).

Chapters end with two to four highly illustrated stand-alone profiles of cultural matters (some clearly food-related, others less so) that serve as photo essays or typologies: four "rules" for eating sushi, photos of four knife-makers from Sakai, seven key regional styles of ramen, five types of fried food, photos of five famous train-station *bentō* 弁当 (to-go meals known as *ekiben* 駅弁), and so on. Although the paper is matte and the dimensions of the book are comfortable for handholding, these interludes give the book the feel of a coffee-table tome – or of a volume intended to be perused casually instead of read sequentially. These segments also contain the majority of errors with Japanese characters or Romanization (I counted eight, not including missing glottal marks or macrons, neither of which are used). Although I appreciate the inclusion of the Japanese characters – this is the

twenty-first century, after all – I also understand what Katherine Chouta of UC Berkeley's Institute of East Asian Studies recently told a colleague of mine about the difficulty of finding copy editors who are capable of navigating Asian text. When mistakes creep in – with *izakaya* 居酒屋 (Japanese pub) rendered as *agemono* 揚げ物 (fried food); *itadakimasu* いただきます (I receive this food) rendered as *oishii* 美味しい (delicious); and *wagyū* 和牛 (Japanese beef) appearing at the head of a profile of a one-table Michelin-starred restaurant on Sado Island where beef is not otherwise mentioned – the errors suggest both that the characters themselves are mere embellishments and that individuals who cannot read Japanese form the target audience. Yet using characters as ornaments is, one could argue, befitting of a book on Japan, where Romanized foreign-language words decorate everything from apparel to *zabuton* (seat cushions).

Nevertheless, even individuals who can read Japanese or who have lived in Japan should be able to appreciate Goulding's book. They, like I, will likely begin searching travel websites for airfare specials soon after reading Goulding's descriptions of his food finds in the foreword. Conceivably, such readers will not be daunted by the fact that Goulding's work, dubbed on the back cover as "not your typical travel guide" and the "first-ever guidebook for the new age of culinary tourism," includes neither addresses nor contact information for the venues he profiles. They may note the accompanying website (http://roadsangkingdoms.com/japan), or they may venture out on their own, to old haunts and promising new spots, savoring the richness of the cuisine and culture to be found in Japan.