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Japan in the Wake of World War II

Reviewed by John Tucker

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BOOK REVIEWS

John W. Dower. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. NY: W.W. Norton, 1999. pp. 677. ISBN 0-393-04686-9.

Reviewed by John Tucker

John Dower's latest contribution to Japanese history, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, will leave no reader disappointed: it is a monumental study of occupation Japan, extraordinary in its multifaceted analysis, quality of research, and, equally importantly, as a model of exceptionally lucid historical prose. Dower's earlier works, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience: 1878-1954* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1979), *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (NY: Pantheon, 1986), and *Japan in War and Peace: Selected Essays* (NY: The New Press, 1993)—each a five-star entry in any bibliography of mid-twentieth century Japanese history—have no doubt created high expectations. *Embracing Defeat* easily satisfies them, but leaves readers wondering how Dower will take Japanese historiography to even higher levels of scholarship that, most virtuously, can be appreciated by general readers and advanced specialists in the field. Though many claim to direct their work to one community or the other, it is rarely the case that academics meet the needs of both nearly as well as Dower does.

In significant ways, *Embracing Defeat* marks Dower's completion of what can be viewed as either a trilogy, or perhaps even a four-volume study of Japan at one of the most critical junctures in its entire history: as it sought, in an incredibly tragic national gamble, to establish itself as the imperial hegemony of Asia and the Pacific, against the determined military will of the United States, and then as it sought to rebuild itself, socially, politically, and ideologically, under American "neocolonial" guidance, in the wake of an utter, even cruel defeat. Earlier, *War Without Mercy* examined the wartime struggle, especially as it related to representations and misrepresentations of the "enemy," by both Americans and Japanese; *Japan in War and Peace*, an anthology of stellar essays, examined similar issues, as well as a host of topics related to the postwar occupation and its aftermath.

With *Embracing Defeat*, Dower continues the second theme of his previous book, while returning to the core of his first, *Empire and Aftermath*, that of the postwar reconstruction, as led and misled by Japanese and their American overlords. Dower's "Introduction" explains that *Embracing Defeat* seeks to explore the postwar occupation as "a lived Japanese experience," rather than as some accounts have, in glowingly positive, self-congratulatory terms as an "American Interlude," or as others have, more negatively and critically, as a "forced Americanization." (p. 24) Dower relates that *Embracing Defeat* attempts to "convey from within" some sense of the Japanese experience of defeat by focusing on social and cultural development as well as on that most elusive of phenomena, "popular consciousness." (p. 25) In taking this approach, Dower's angle differs, as he admits, from that followed in most historical accounts, including his own, which have tended to focus on the thinking, decisions, and deeds of high-level power brokers, such as Yoshida Shigeru, SCAP General Douglas MacArthur, Harry Truman, and others. While the latter figures inevitably enter Dower's analysis at every turn, *Embracing Defeat* more seeks "to capture a sense of what it meant to start over in a ruined world by recovering the voices of people of all levels of society." (p. 25) Dower avoids any simplistic analysis casting the early postwar mood in terms of a "single, or singular Japanese," emphasizing instead the "kaleidoscopic" nature of the response to an often "schizophrenic" occupation, which mixed visions of "democratization" with "severe authoritarian rule." (pp. 26-7)

Embracing Defeat is divided into six sections, the first of which, "Victor and Vanquished," opens with the chapter, "Shattered Lives," exploring Japanese memories of and reactions to the broadcast of the emperor's "euphemistic surrender" (p. 34) statement, juxtaposing it with the later acceptance, by Japanese diplomats but not the emperor, of "unconditional surrender" on September 2, aboard the Missouri. Yet the analysis quickly moves away from the main stage of high-level history that of nations, leaders, generals, and treaties, to the popular level, where Japanese experienced a shattering of the ideological unity so intensely articulated and popularly reaffirmed throughout the war. Dower especially focuses on "the country's new outcasts" (p. 61) i.e., the "despised veterans," (p. 58) their families, their orphans and their widows who now became *pariahs* (p. 60) in their own land. The second chapter, "Gifts from Heaven," while highlighting the postwar cartoons of Katô Etsurô, as well as photographs of poignant moments in the remaking of Japan, has as its main

theme the perceived “gifts from heaven,” i.e., the “democratic revolution from above,” (p. 69) largely decreed by MacArthur’s GHQ, as well as anxieties among some Japanese that they had not done enough to make it their own, and others, such as Yoshida Shigeru, who doubted that democratization would ever succeed in Japan

Part II, “Transcending Despair,” opens with one of the most haunting chapters of the text, “*Kyodatsu*: Exhaustion and Despair,” examining the psychological rather than political aspects of the surrender. Here, Dower links *kyodatsu*, an intensely felt sense of physical and mental exhaustion, dejection, despair, and demoralization, with the emperor’s surrender statement asking Japanese to “endure the unendurable,” (pp. 97-104) making the latter request far more meaningful at the personal level than its oxymoronic phrasing might seem to suggest. Chapter four, “Cultures of Defeat,” probes the emergence of new forms of popular culture that accompanied, and in some cases, succeeded the experience of *kyodatsu*. Dower analyzes three key “subcultures” that “electrified popular consciousness,” the world of *panpan* prostitution, the black market, and the *kasutori demimonde*. Combined, these subcultures “celebrated self-indulgence and introduced such enduring attractions as pulp literature and commercialized sex.” (p. 122) Chapter five, “Bridges of Language,” explores the semantic transformation, including puns, sarcasms, and jokes, that were simultaneous with the socio-political one, often inextricably bound to it. In this context, Dower examines everything from cigarette brand names, to the names of liquors, clothing styles, etc., as well as “catchwords” such as reconstruction, brightness, culture, and new, postwar lexicons, works of popular literature, journals, and the publishing houses that emerged, quickly and relentlessly, to present this new discourse of “liberation.”

Part three, “Revolutions,” opens with the sixth chapter, “Neo-Colonial Revolution,” highlighting Dower’s comprehensive assessment of the occupation. Rather than indulge in a pro-American, congratulatory account, Dower emphasizes the contradictions inherent in the occupation, and especially the extent to which it and its leader, General Douglas MacArthur, were removed from the Japanese. In one telling observation, Dower relates that, “[MacArthur] never socialized with Japanese; and, according to one intimate observer, ‘only sixteen Japanese ever spoke with him more than twice, and none of these was under the rank, say, of Premier, Chief Justice, president of the largest university.’” (p. 204) Elsewhere, Dower adds “while the victors preached democracy, they ruled by fiat; while they espoused

equality, they themselves constituted an inviolate privileged caste.” Moreover, he observes that “almost every interaction between victor and vanquished was infused with intimations of white supremacism.” Thus, Dower concludes, “for all its uniqueness of time, place and circumstance the occupation was but a new manifestation of the old racial paternalism that historically accompanied the global expansion of the western powers.” (p. 211)

Chapter seven, “Embracing Revolution,” paraphrases the title of the book and in many respects conveys its quintessence: that “spontaneous popular responses to the victors” were “more vigorous” than predicted. (p. 227) Not only was this “embrace” directed, metaphorically, toward MacArthur, the SCAP command, its ideals, and ideologies, but also to European thought, Marxism, and other ideologies alien to either the wartime state or the postwar victor, but nevertheless validated due to their associations with earlier opposition to the wartime regime. In examining the Japanese “embrace” of occupation, Dower includes poignant, tragicomic examples. Thus, he notes that even in Nagasaki “residents welcomed the first Americans with gifts and shortly afterward joined local US military personnel in sponsoring a ‘Miss Atomic Bomb’ beauty contest.” (p. 241) Chapter eight, “Making Revolution,” further explores the reappearance of socialist and communists groups in newly liberated postwar Japan, though this time following the strategy of “peaceful revolution,” “lovability” and extraordinary willingness to participate in cultural accommodation (appealing to both SCAP and the Emperor for support of their various proposals) (pp. 262-3). Dower recognizes, of course, that the Communists and Socialists were marginalized by the “reverse course,” but adds that these same left-wing groups nevertheless became “the staunchest defenders” of the “initial occupation ideals of demilitarization and democratization.” (p. 273)

Part four, “Democracies,” comprised of six chapters focusing on the emperor and the postwar constitution, is by far the longest. It opens with chapter nine, “Imperial Democracy: Driving the Wedge,” analyzing the SCAP decision to “resituate” Hirohito at “the center of their new democracy” while, at the same time, “driving a wedge” between the emperor and military leaders, suggesting that the latter were “gangster militarists” (p. 281) who had to be prosecuted, while he was an innocent who should be salvaged. Dower sharply criticizes the “arbitrary” justice that allowed imperial wartime responsibility to remain unexamined. Indeed, he states that the postwar constitution’s definition of the emperor as

symbolic of “the unity of the people” amounted to, in certain respects, “a new way of phrasing the old ‘family nation’ ideology.” Furthermore, it permitted the emperor to remain the “the incarnation of a putative racial purity as well cultural homogeneity,” “high priest of the indigenous Shinto religion,” and “the supreme icon of genetic separateness and blood nationalism.” (p. 278) In chapter ten, “Imperial Democracy: Descending Partway from Heaven,” Dower continues his examination of the rehabilitation of the emperor, noting how postwar pedestrians seem to have assumed the role of largely indifferent “spectators” in observing the fate of their emperor. The much vaunted emperor worship appeared, Dower notes, as so much *tatemaie*. (p. 303) Dower offers especially insightful analysis of the January 1, 1946 New Year’s Day rescript in which Hirohito supposedly renounced his divinity, highlighting the extent to which the emperor diverted attention away from the renunciation by reiterating, beforehand, the Meiji Charter Oath, and then, rather than unequivocally renounce his divinity in omnibus fashion, Hirohito only denied that he was an *akitsumikami*, or a “manifest deity.” In renouncing this obscure attribute, Hirohito avoided doing what he deemed “absolutely unacceptable:” declaring imperial descent from the gods to be a “false conception.” (p. 316) Dower thus concludes that Hirohito’s descent from divine status was only “partway,” “more obscure than was apparent,” and that “when all was said and done, the sovereign had not changed his color.” (p. 318)

In chapter eleven, “Imperial Democracy: Evading Responsibility,” Dower describes the “successful campaign to absolve the emperor of war responsibility,” sarcastically noting that in it, the “prosecution functioned, in effect, as a defense team for the emperor.” (p. 326) Dower points out that while many thinking Japanese thought that Hirohito ought to abdicate so as to absolve himself of guilt and purify the throne, in the end there was no pressure from SCAP for him to do the same. Consequently, Hirohito shuffled into the postwar a free man; doing otherwise would have, apparently, required more strength, courage, and selflessness than he had ever been able to muster. At the same time, while he remained emperor, Hirohito was transformed into a “manifest human,” Dower facetiously suggests, by massive efforts to parade the awkward, inarticulate, physically unassuming, and socially ill at ease man among the public as often as possible. These tours, known as common *junkô* rather than august *gyôkô*, turned “the monarch into a celebrity.” (p. 330)

Chapter twelve, “Constitutional Democracy: GHQ Writes A New National Charter,” details the dialectic of initial Japanese efforts, in the

form of the Matsumoto Committee, to offer acceptable “revisions” of the Meiji constitution, and then the SCAP’s idealistic but highhanded rejection of the same, and its drafting of a new constitution based on a distinctly American model, with clear “echoes of the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and the US Constitution.” (p. 370) Chapter thirteen, “Constitutionalizing Democracy: Japanizing the American Draft,” follows up on this analysis by noting how even this most American document, in English draft, was diluted in translation via use of obscure and ambiguous Japanese terminology, of which, not surprisingly, SCAP had little clear grasp or immediate concern. One example, the ambiguity in Article Nine’s “renunciation of war,” resulted in numerous constitutional disputes when it was related to issues of self-defense and security alliances. Chapter fourteen, “Censored Democracy: Policing the New Taboos,” brings to the fore the extent to which the occupation forces fostered a sense of “the inviolability of the nation’s second emperor, General MacArthur,” (p. 405) so much so that they “continued socialization in the acceptance of authority—reinforcement of a collective fatalism vis-à-vis political and social power and a sense that ordinary people were really unable to influence the course of events.” (pp. 439-440) Along the way, to preserve the appearance of democratic revolution it was necessary to censor “the existence of censorship itself” and cultivate a “mystique of the immaculate allies,” something that “cast a taint of hypocrisy on the Americans and compared poorly with the old system of the militarists and ultranationalists.” (p. 410)

Part Five, “Guilts,” opens with chapter fifteen, “Victor’s Justice, Loser’s Justice,” an examination of the controversial Tokyo war-crimes trial. Dower highlights numerous anomalies related to the Tokyo tribunal, including MacArthur’s criticisms of the trials, their theatrical nature, total exclusion of the emperor, and their “white man’s” bias, associating these aspects with “victor’s justice.” True to his focus on the Japanese experience, however, Dower also emphasizes Japanese expressions of the logic of “loser’s justice” which alleged, “Japan had been led into ‘aggressive militarism’ by a small cabal of irresponsible militaristic leaders.” Interestingly, Dower suggests that the net-effect of “loser’s justice,” especially in the figures that it would have targeted, might not have differed significantly from “victor’s justice,” and it would furthermore have benefited Japan by allowing it to assume final responsibility for the war. Nevertheless this was not allowed, which compromised the integrity of “victor’s justice” and weakened Japanese efforts to resolve matters related

to war guilt and responsibility. Chapter sixteen, “What Do You Tell the Dead When You Lose?” answers its question, simply put, in terms of “the most ubiquitous passive verb after the surrender,” *damasareta*, meaning, “to have been deceived.” More complexly, Dower examines the more intellectual responses of postwar thinkers such as Nanbara Shigeru, president of Tokyo Imperial University, Prince Higashikuni, the Kyoto University professor Tanabe Hajime, and others in their efforts to formulate explanations of what had happened, and how it might be dealt with.

Part Six, “Reconstructions,” opens with chapter seventeen, “Engineering Growth,” a brief examination of the postwar recovery as it developed during the occupation, especially as a reversal of the “hands off” policy decreed by MacArthur, stipulating that SCAP would “not assume any responsibility for the economic rehabilitation of Japan or the strengthening of the Japanese economy.” (p. 529) At best, Dower shows, American planners envisioned “a neutered version of the old Japanese economy—of a trading nation weaned from massive military production and turning out cheap exports of the five-and-dime variety, ‘Oriental’ specialties, or labor-intensive products.” (p. 536) John Foster Dulles thus “blithely” suggested to a high Finance Ministry official that Japan consider exporting “cocktail napkins to the United States.” (p. 537) Japanese planners, however, formulated their goals after the advances of the revved up, wartime economy. True to the confines of his subject matter, postwar occupation, rather than the much ballyhooed story of the postwar “economic miracle,” Dower concludes his examination of material recovery noting that prospects were improved, somewhat disturbingly, due to “gifts from the gods,” i.e., “special procurements” from the US during the Korean War, providing for an economic recovery that left Japan still “dependent on military demands,” (p. 543) and operating within the confines of an economy “closely controlled from above.” (p. 546) Dower’s epilogue, “Legacies/Fantasies/Dreams,” briefly sketches, among other things, the remilitarization of Japan during the Korean War, with the creation of the National Police Reserve, yet without the support of the Yoshida government, business circles, or popular support. The epilogue also launches into reflections about the “hybrid legacy” of the neocolonial revolution, one that provided for “genuinely progressive change and a reaffirmation of authoritarian structures of governance.” (pp. 547, 561) Dower offers no easy forecasts, ominous or otherwise, regarding Japan’s future, though he readily laments the relative loss of idealism among many, especially in relation to demilitarization and democracy. While reviewers

should be cautious in faulting work of this scale and magnitude, it does seem that if readers have any complaints they will be that the final page (p. 564) comes much too quickly, leaving them with a thirst for more of the superb attention to detail and penetrating analysis provided them throughout the text.

Hamaguchi, Eshun (editor). *Nihon Shakaitowa Nanika: Fukuzatsukeino Shitenkara (What is Japanese Society?—From The Perspective of the Complex System)*. Tokyo: NHK Books, 1998, pp. 316. 1,169 Yen.

Reviewed by Kinko Ito

Nihon Shakaitowa Nanika, as the title appropriately suggests, is a book about the essence of Japanese society and culture and what makes them unique. The book consists of ontological studies of the complex Japanese scholars and a Czech professor whose specialties and disciplines range from industrial organization, social psychology, sociology, linguistics, intercultural communication, Japanese education, and philosophy to economics.

The book originated as a report of Kokusai Nihon Bunka Kenkyu Center in Kyoto, an international institute of Japanese cultural studies that are supported by the Ministry of Education. The report was the result of a group of studies compiled by 28 professors and researchers between April 1995 and March 1997 on the organizing principles of Japanese systems.

Professor Eshun Hamaguchi, editor of the book and the head of the research group, is a scholar whose specialties include theories of Japan and the Japanese, comparative sociology, and psychological anthropology. He is well known for his theories of Japanese psychology and social systems based on the relational model called *kanjin* or “the contextual.” Eshun Hamaguchi claims that the Japanese society can be analyzed more appropriately by using a model of “the contextual” instead of using the opposite notions of western individualism vs. Japanese collectivism, which often is considered the prototype of Japanese society. Eshun Hamaguchi and many other contributors see the post-modern Japanese society and its human relations in the 21st century in more relational, contextual, and thus flexible terms. There has been fundamental worldwide social change in terms of values and lifestyles, and Japan is not an exception. The book discusses the idea that the focus of the research should shift from the utility

that pushed the modernization process to credibility that is the new basis for social and human relations.

Contextualism has three major characteristics: 1) mutual dependence that assumes that cooperation is inevitable in society, 2) mutual reliance that requires mutual trust and credibility, and 3) regard for interpersonal relations not as means but as an end in themselves. The book suggests a paradigm shift from methodological individualism to methodological relatum that focuses more on individuals in groups, and above all, individuals in situational and relational contexts.

Nihon Shakaitowa Nanika consists of three parts: Section One has five chapters, and it deals with the organizing principles of formation of the Japanese system from the perspective that views it as a complex system. The articles included in this section analyze the nature and characteristics of the Japanese systems emergentistically. Many examples are taken from the fields of social psychology, existentialism, market economy, industrial organizations, information science, and organismic analogy. The studies on Japan and the Japanese as well as the methodologies for studying them have often used the paradigm that pertained to the western universal standard, or model of individualism that was not always applicable for explaining Japanese society and culture. They also tended towards reductionism. The writers suggest that a new paradigm is needed to explain the ontology of Japanese systems.

Section Two is comprised of eight chapters, and focuses on the characteristics of the Japanese systems and analyzes them from various disciplines and standpoints such as economics, education, psychology, management, and Japanese linguistics. Some of the topics covered in this section are the structure of Japanese culture, the bottom-up collective decision-making system, principles of Japanese codependence seen from children's perspectives, and analysis of economic philosophy at the end of the Tokugawa period.

Section Three consists of four chapters that are a report of Eshun Hamaguchi, et. al., research on contextualism and statistics that involved an international sample of 6,400 people from more than twenty countries. The researchers tested the applicability of the notion of *kanjin* (contextualism, the contextual) in different societies and found that it is more or less a universal paradigm that can be used to explain these countries that seem to differ much on the surface. This section also includes a questionnaire used in the survey. The findings show that 1) it is not always correct to assume that western societies are characterized by individualism and Japanese

society by contextualism or collectivism, and 2) the notion of contextualism that is based on mutual, interdependent relations and reliance has been considered unique to Japan, but it is also applicable for explaining social and human relations of other countries where it sometimes coexists with individualism.

Sakai Naoki, senior editor, and Yukiko Hanawa, co-editor. *TRACES* #1 (November 2000). Japanese edition. Tokyo: Iwanami-shoten, published as a special issue of *SHISO* (Thought), No. 918. ISSN 0386-2755.

Reviewed by Keiko Matsui Gibson

TRACES is a unique publication because it is issued in five languages, namely, English, Japanese, German, Chinese, and Korean, each in separate volume. Unlike most academic journals in the United States, its purpose, as stated in its first issue, is to deal with cultural theories that transcend national boundaries, without treating English as a privileged language, thus challenging national prejudices and even the reliance on one's national language. It also challenges the misconception that theories originate and develop exclusively in the west, whereas mostly non-rational ideas and information come from non-western cultures. These other cultural prejudices are courageously and effectively challenged. Those associated with this remarkable journal respect the particularities of the five cultures, as well as others, while at the same time attempting to universalize ideas trans-nationally. Contributors develop and transcend such recent theories of the social sciences and humanities as feminism, gender studies, queer theory, cultural studies, and post-colonialism examining them in fresh cultural contexts.

This review is of the Japanese version of the first edition of *TRACES*, which focuses on the "*borei*" of the west and the cultural politics of translation. The Japanese word may enigmatically mean apparition, phantom, or spirit of the dead. Some articles were originally written in Japanese, while others are translated into Japanese from other languages. Among members of the Advisory Collective are such luminaries as Jacques Derrida, Benedict Anderson, Harry Harootunian, Kojin Karatani, and Jean-Luc Nancy. On the Editorial Collective are such leading scholars as Brett de Bary and Megan Morris, who will edit the second edition, forthcoming in the spring of 2001.

In the fourth section of this issue on the west and the other, regional politics, translation and modernity, and *TRACES'* internationalism-contributors center on two major themes: a reinterpretation of western modernity and the cultural politics of translation. They attack such common misconceptions that modernity is monolithic and exclusively western, showing how diverse modernity is not only in the west, but in many non-western cultures. They relate various kinds of modernity spatially as well as temporally. In subverting the alleged supremacy of western culture, they question, for example, why ethnicity is too often regarded as a deviation from western norms, instead of analyzing "mainstream" European and American cultures as ethnic cases among others. In criticizing the idealistic glorifications of modernity. Harry Harootunian also reveals romantic fallacies of utopian alternatives to modernity, arguing that the unrealistic advocacy of a kind of pre-modern purity is just as romantic as modernity itself.

Concerning Japan, Satoshi Ukai criticizes Ruth Benedict's oversimplified distinction between shame and guilt, and the reactions to her work by such Japanese scholars as Watsuji and Yanagida. In developing a complex theory of shame, Satoshi Ukai argues with profound philosophical subtlety that translation entails an inevitable sense of shame because of the cultural mismatch of languages. In another insightful though brief article, J. Victor Koschmann attacks the assumption behind most translating into English, that the concrete, specific, often special and unique meanings of original texts-often felt to be "irrational"—are distorted by being rationalized and universalized in English versions.

Generally, in challenging the idea of English supremacy, contributors to *TRACES* direct their ideas to readers for whom English is probably not their native language. Such cross-cultural communication is highly creative and experimental, going far and beyond the limits of most scholarly publications.

Peter Clarke (editor). *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective*. UK: Curson, 2000. pp. 317.

Reviewed by Cristina Moreira da Rocha

Peter Clarke has now been working with Japanese New Religious Movements (NRMs) for quite a long time. Following his earlier editorial work with J. Somers, *Japanese New Religions in the West* (1994), his *Bibliography of Japanese New Religious Movements* (1999) and his many journal articles, Clarke has put together a commendable new book on the subject. *Japanese New Religions in Global Perspective* is a collection of case studies of Japanese NRMs in many parts of the world (UK, Australia, USA, Germany, and Brazil), as well as a presentation of more theoretical essays on Japanese NRMs that explore the intrinsic nationalism of NRMs despite universal trends, their relationship with Japanese corporations, with millenarianism, with health and illnesses issues, and the reasons for their success or failure in the west.

In his introduction, Clarke advocates the idea of “reverse globalization,” and examines its emphasis on multi-directional modes of exchange and influence. He argues, as other authors have done, that globalization is not necessarily synonymous with westernization and that this is attested to by the rapid expansion of Japanese NRMs in the west. Clarke also contributes two essays in the book (they do not follow one another, but are put together here for analytical purposes): one on millenarianism and the *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* (Church of World Messianity) in Brazil, and the other on why Japanese NRMs succeed or fail abroad. His first essay discusses in detail the millenarian aspects of Japanese NRMs, the historical contexts of the emergence and development of *Omotokyo*, *Tensho-Kotai-Jingo-Kyo* and *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* in Japan, and the formation of *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* in Brazil. He shows that unlike Europe and the US where the numbers of adherents are low, the popularity of this movement in Brazil has grown out of the Japanese immigrants’ community as a result of its strategies of adaptation. *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* found itself a religious and cultural matrix onto which to juxtapose its own doctrines and ritual practices in the form of Catholicism and Afro-Brazilian religions, moving out of the ethnic enclave. Clarke’s essay is indeed a comprehensive work on *Sekai Kyusei Kyo*’s activities in Brazil, its future plans and on the reasons for the conversion of Brazilians of non-Japanese origin. His second contribution is a well-researched essay on the current number of adherents

and strategies of adaptation of as many as eleven Japanese NRMs around the world. NRMs in Brazil, the US and Europe are the primary focus of this essay and Clarke skillfully contrasts the successful development of Japanese NRMs in Brazil and their failure (or slow expansion) in other geographical areas. Success, Clarke concludes, depends on “adaptation in key areas such as language and ritual. However, the difficulties involved in developing a theory that can make sense of success and failure from a cross-cultural perspective are probably insurmountable.” (p. 308)

In her contribution to the collection, Catherine Cornille offers a stimulating account of how Japanese NRMs, which grew out as an answer to the loss of identity, tradition and culture experienced in the face of westernization from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, have been able to combine their need for universalism and expansionism with their nationalistic origins. However, Cornille concludes that apart from *Mahikari* and *Sokka Gakkai*, the membership of NRMs she focused on in her paper (*Tenrikyō*, *Omotokyo*, *Sekai Kyusei Kyo*), “consisted mainly of expatriates and [therefore] little effort has been done to adapt ritual forms and doctrine.” (p. 30) Yet, in the light of Peter Clarke’s and Ari Pedro Oro’s essays on the *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* one sees that such efforts were made in Brazil and generated many fruits. Indeed, according to Clarke, Messianity had “320,000 members by the late 1980, over 90% of whom are Brazilians of non-Japanese origin.” (p. 161)

Louella Matsunaga also contributes two essays. The first is on the relationship between Japanese corporations and Japanese New Religions. By calling her paper, “Spiritual Companies, Corporate Religions,” she is obviously establishing a parallel with Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*. Yet, she argues that in contrast to the Weberian idea of frugality and its association with the values of prosperity and virtue, the work ethic promoted by NRMs tends to privilege consumption and the visible signs of wealth as positive values. So much for the times we live in. This is indeed a very thought-provoking paper.

Matsunaga’s second essay is equally stimulating. It focuses on notions of health, illness and disease in *Mahikari* in Japan and its branches in the UK. The research aimed to find out how this movement was able to grow outside Japan, despite the fact that its concepts of health and illness were deeply ingrained in the Japanese worldview. She argues that because “of the diversity of belief system and cultural background of the people in present day Britain, and [because] of the increasing permeability of cultural boundaries, as well as the implicit pluralism of the movement’s own

teachings,” (p. 233) such concepts of health, illness and disease are not perceived as entirely alien.

Gary Bouma, Wendy Smith and Shiva Vasi present a picture of *Mahikari* and Zen in Australia. Although most of their essay is dedicated to *Mahikari*, only the last few pages are on Zen, the portion on *Mahikari* is very thorough. It outlines a clear profile of Australian *Mahikari* adherents, the movement’s history in the country, and establishes an interesting comparison between *Mahikari* practices in Australia and Japan.

Unfortunately, Ari Pedro Oro’s essay suffers from an array of shortcomings. The most visible one is editing. The text does not flow well and many expressions appear as literal and hence somewhat crude translations from Portuguese. While Ari Pedro Oro has done good work on Afro-Brazilian religions, Pentecostalism and Catholicism in Brazil, this is his first study on Japanese immigration to Brazil and Japanese religions in the country. Although his talents as an anthropologist of religion enable him to encompass the standard issues, use of a suitable bibliography and knowledge of the field are lacking. For instance, when discussing Japanese immigrants in Brazil, Oro insists that the Japanese, “have achieved an enviable life standard in contemporary Brazilian society,” (p. 115) and restates this assertion again in a footnote. (p. 126) This is highly questionable in light of extensive scholarship on Brazilian-Japanese migration to Japan which demonstrates that 200,000 Brazilian-Japanese descendants (the so-called *dekasegi*) have returned to Japan to work in menial jobs since the end of the 1980s (see, for example, Keiko Yamanaka, “I’ll Go Home but When? Labor Migration and Circular Diaspora Formation by Japanese Brazilians in Japan,” in Mike Douglas and Glenda Roberts, eds., *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* [NY: Routledge, 2000], pp: 123-152.)

Sanda Ionescu’s essay on *Sokka Gakkai* in Germany sheds light on questions that many essays in this book also ask. For instance, how can a foreign religious movement become relevant in another country? How much of it should be adapted to the new context and what should be kept in order to retain integrity and “authenticity?” Has *Sokka Gakkai* over-adapted? Ionescu argues that *Sokka Gakkai*’s success in Germany shows that it has found a balance between universality and specificity.

Tina Hamrin’s analysis of *Tensho-Kitai-Jingu-Kyo* differs from the previous essays in that it focuses on the movement itself, and the ideas of spirit possession, health and salvation and not on the difficulties of transplantation of this movement to Hawaii.

Finally, Alfred Bloom's essay offers us an insight on why a traditional form of Japanese Buddhism such as *Jōdō Shinshū*, in spite of being the faith of the majority of the Japanese immigrants and descendants, is still very little known by westerners.

This book is both commendable and stimulating, despite some glaring flaws in its editing. For instance, in each essay the authors understandably start with the historical origin of a specific Japanese NRM, its doctrine, and a description of its ritual practices; this creates problems when all the essays deal with the same movement. Readers have to wade patiently through somewhat repetitive background information about the religious movements before reaching new data and analysis.

However, the book offers a highly original and thought-provoking collection of papers overall, which, together with Peter Clarke's previous books, succeeds in painting a comprehensive and nuance picture of Japanese NRMs in Japan and in the west today.

Steven Heine. *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text: Philosophy and Folklore in the Fox Kōan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 312. \$58.00 cloth, ISBN 0-8248-2150-5. \$31.95 paper, ISBN 0-8248-2197-1.

Reviewed by Gereon Kopf

In his book, *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text*, Steven Heine presents an impressive multivalent exploration of the fox kōan, which, not unlike its subject matter, operates on a multiplicity of discursive levels. On one level, he investigates the transmission and interpretation of Pai-chang Huai-hai's fox kōan as presented in the *Wu-men kuan* (*Mumonkan*) and the *Ts'ung-jung lu* (*Shōyōroku*). On a second level, Heine, who is a distinguished Dōgen scholar, recognizes the importance of the fox kōan to the work of Dōgen and, specifically, to the current controversy in Dōgen studies between proponents of Critical Buddhism (*hihan Bukkyō*), such as that of Hakamaya Noriaki and Matsumoto Shirō, and traditional scholarship. At the center of this controversy lies the relationship between Dōgen's 75-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō* and his 12-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*. The Buddhological and philosophical difference between both texts is expressed in the diverging interpretations of Pai-chang's fox kōan in the fascicles "*Daishugyō*" and "*Jinshin inga*." His exploration of this controversy leads Heine furthermore into the Buddhist discourse on causality as well as its implications for the

conceptualization of *samsara*, *nirvana*, and Buddha-nature (*tathagatagarbha*) and, by implication, its significance for the discussion of the “thought of original enlightenment” (*hongaku shisō*). Finally, Heine enters the particular discussion on whether Zen Buddhism in Sung China and in the Kamakura period rejected or appropriated folklore traditions and, subsequently, as Bernard Faure implies, the relationship between “great” and “little” traditions in the more general discourse of religious studies. In each case, Heine, faithful to a postmodern and/or Zen approach, seems to refuse to privilege one extreme position over its counterpart. While this tactic might frustrate the reader, this insightful study not only critically illuminates the complexities of the controversies in question and the difficulty (if not impossibility) of assuming an exclusive position in these debates, but also implicitly points the way towards a Zen approach towards Zen studies.

In discussing Pai-chang’s fox kōan, its antecedents (which he traces as far back as the Jataka tales), and the history of its transmission and interpretation, Heine does a superb job identifying the various literary strands and overlapping discourses that constitute the complex structure of the kōan. The kōan, which is transmitted under the names “Pai-chang’s fox kōan,” “Pai-chang and the wild fox,” and “kōan of great cultivation” (C. *Ta-hsiu-hsin*; J. *Daishugyō*), relates the story of the encounter between Zen master Pai-chang and a *fei-ren* (a fox spirit with shape-shifting ability) disguised as a monk. The kōan reveals that the *fei-ren*, who had been the abbot at Pai-chang’s temple in the age of the Buddha Kasyapa, was transformed into a fox spirit upon telling a student that “a person of great cultivation does not fall into causality” (C. *Pu-lo yin-kuo*; J. *Furaku inga*). When Pai-chang explains to him that, “such a person does not obscure causality” (C. *Pu-mei yin-kuo*; J. *Fumai inga*), the old man is instantaneously awakened. In the postscript of this encounter dialogue, the corpse of the fox is buried according to monastic rules and Huang-po, Pai-chang’s disciple, corrects Pai-chang’s own understanding of the subject matter. Thus, the fox kōan clearly incorporates standard, de-mythological Ch’an/Zen rhetoric, mythological elements of folklore, a discussion of monastic rituals, and the philosophical discourse on causality.

Exploring the interpretive traditions of this particular kōan, Heine argues that traditional commentaries fall into two basic groups. One follows the *Wu-men kuan*’s observation that “Not falling [into causality]” and “not obscuring [causality]” are “Two sides of the same coin” and Dōgen’s “*Daishugyō*,” which asserts the non-duality of causality and non-causality

and, subsequently, samsara and nirvana. The other, which is represented by Dôgen's "*Jinshin inga*," rejects the notion of non-causality in favor of a strictly causal worldview. Heine describes these two positions using Zen polemic as "the Zen of 'wild fox drool'" (C. *Yeh-hu hsien*; J. *Yako-zen*) and "wild fox Zen" (C. *Yeh-hu Ch'an*; J. *Yako-Zen*) respectively. Similarly, contemporary historians point out the mythological and syncretistic elements in the fox kôan while Zen proponents predominantly interpreted this kôan to be de-mythological and iconoclastic in its function. However, Heine adds insightfully that, besides the traditional Buddhist discourse on causality and the classic Zen polemic against supernaturalism, the fox kôan addresses two further topics: on the one hand, it affirms the belief in supernatural beings and metamorphoses and, on the other, it introduces the motif of repentance. Drawing on William LaFleur's comparative study of kôans and *setsuwa* literature, Heine suggests that one could interpret the fox kôan as the conversion of Pai-chang. Heine provides three keys for such an interpretation. First, the five hundred life times, which the previous abbot spent as a fox, indicate Pai-chang's endurance of a "profound sense of shame." Second, the fact that the transformed individual is the previous abbot of Pai-chang's temple suggests that the abbot/fox symbolizes a previous form of Pai-chang himself. Third, Huang-po's slap identifies Pai-chang as the subject of the possession, confession, exorcism, and renunciation.

A reading, which underlines the complex structure of the fox kôan, Heine argues convincingly, cannot be done justice in a simple reduction to one discourse. First, he addresses the controversy surrounding the claim of Critical Buddhism that Dôgen's rejection of non-causality in "*Jinshin inga*" has to be interpreted as a conversion of Dôgen to the "true Buddhism" of, what Heine calls, "deep faith in causality" rather than an expedient means (Sk. *Upaya*; J. *Hôben*) for disciples unable to grasp the non-duality of causality and non-causality as suggested by traditional Dôgen scholarship. While Heine is sympathetic to Hakamaya's emphasis on Dôgen's assertion of causality, he criticizes Hakamaya insofar as he "examines the 12-fascicle text in one-sided isolation from Dôgen's other writings." Ultimately, Heine concludes, both traditional Dôgen scholarship and Critical Buddhism fail "to acknowledge the influence of popular religiosity" in Dôgen's work. However, Heine is careful to avoid the other extreme that focuses almost exclusively on the role of popular religion and/or the history of monastic institutions as it is suggested by the positive historiographies of William Bodiford, Martin Collcutt and Griffith Foulk.

Heine also refuses to accept the simple dichotomy between the “little” and the “great” traditions that imply that Zen either adopts or rejects folklore beliefs in supernatural beings and powers. On the contrary he argues, following Faure, that underlying the “facade of univocality is a pervasive multivocality.” However, Heine suggests that it is not enough to acknowledge, following Yamaoka Takaaki, the “two levels of religiosity” of Sung and Kamakura Ch’an/Zen, namely “self-discipline and self-negation,” on the one side, and the quest for “worldly benefits” (J. *Genze riyaku*) on the other, but includes the monastic discipline as a third discourse. Ultimately, however, Heine suggests an “intertextual transference,” which rejects the hierarchical (or reductionist) models in favor of a horizontal model.

Heine argues successfully “that the compromise approach shows how Zen was affected by popular religion in that both derive from a common but dispersed and polysemous force field of fox imagery where one person or one text participates in two or more discourses or two or more discourses are simultaneously expressed in a single person or text.” Thus, Heine not only critically illuminates the polysemous and multilayered structure of the fox kōan but he also points Zen scholarship toward a new methodological approach. Heine suggests supplementing historical, textual, and anthropological approaches with the insights of critical theory, suggesting that one considers the double meaning of Jacques Derrida’s difference as “to defer” and “to differ” as a hermeneutical clue. In addition, his approach could be read to suggest that the kōan discourse itself can contribute important hermeneutical clues—Heine ends his essay with a quote from the *Wu-men kuan* asking “[n]ow, tell me, what will you do?” Could the unfolding dialogue structure, which Bernard Faure suggests to be characteristic of the Ch’an/Zen kōans and encounter dialogues, not function as a hermeneutical device to decipher the kōans and their polysemous and multivalent structure? Similar, if non-duality is at the heart of Ch’an/Zen rhetoric, does this not disqualify any kind of reductionism as an interpretive strategy?

In his *Shōbōgenzō* fascicle “*Mitsugo*,” Dōgen himself offers a hermeneutical strategy of reading kōans (in this case Shakyamuni’s flower sermon), which suggests, in almost Derridean fashion, to continuously undercut and destabilize any interpretation that attempts to destroy or reduce the inherent ambivalence of silence and words in the Kōan. In his essay “Ch’an Hermeneutics,” Robert Buswell similarly suggests that Ch’an/Son/Zen hermeneutical devices such as “[t]he live word/dead word

notion and the use of circular graphics provide an approach to Ch'an interpretation that follows greater fidelity to the historical and doctrinal contexts of that tradition than would the inevitably culture-bound concepts of western hermeneutics." (Buswell, 1988, p. 250) I think the same would apply to kôan studies. I believe that a dialogue between different hermeneutics can only enrich our methodological devices. Thus, Heine's *Shifting Shape, Shaping Text* not only presents an extremely thoughtful analysis of the fox kôan but also makes an invaluable contribution to Zen studies in general in that it opens the door to new methodological considerations which may take their clues from the kôan discourse itself.

REFERENCE

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