REVIEWS

SUEKI Fumihiko 末木文美士, *Kamakura Bukkyō keisei ron: Shisōshi no tachiba kara* 鎌倉仏教形成論——思想史の立場から (A discussion of the formation of Kamakura Buddhism, from the standpoint of intellectual history). Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1998. x + 418 pp. with indices. ¥5,800 cloth, ISBN 4-8318-7272-1.

SUEKI FUMIHIKO of the University of Tokyo is one of Japan's leading scholars of Japanese Buddhist thought. Here he examines significant issues in the study of the Buddhism of the Kamakura period (1185–1333), long considered a seminal era in the history of Japanese Buddhism. His study consists of fourteen chapters, twelve first published as independent articles and two written expressly for this volume. With two exceptions—drawn from his master's thesis on Hōnen completed in the 1970s under the guidance of Tamura Yoshirō—all represent his recent work. The book consists of an introduction, four sections, and a conclusion. Part I, "Exoteric and Esoteric," reconsiders these key categories in medieval Japanese Buddhism. Part II, "Hōnen and His Milieu," and Part III, "Myōe and His Milieu," address the thought of Hōnen Shōnin Genkū 法然上人源空 (1133–1212) and Myōe Shōnin Kōben 明恵上人高弁 (1173–1232) as representatives of the Kamakura new Buddhist movements and the Buddhist establishment, respectively. Part IV, "The Formation of Original Enlightenment Thought," examines texts related to the doctrine of original enlightenment (*hongaku hōmon* 本覚法門), which is linked to medieval developments in both "new" and "old" Buddhist thought.

Sueki calls for an integrated view of Kamakura Buddhism, one not confined to the tension between the breakaway sectarian followings of Hōnen, Shinran, Dōgen, Nichiren, etc., and the mainstream Buddhist establishment, but one also able to discover points of commonality between "old" and "new" Buddhism. He sees, too, a need for greater understanding of continuities between Kamakura Buddhism and earlier forms. Himself a specialist in the Buddhism of the Heian period (794–1185), Sueki questions widespread characterizations of the Kamakura period as the watershed moment in the history of Japanese Buddhism. Kūkai's (774–835) establishment of esoteric Buddhism and the discourse of realizing Buddhahood in this very body; notions of the universal and equal capacity for Buddhahood inherent in Tendai doctrine of the One Vehicle; Saichō's (767–822) introduction of the bodhisattva precepts and their subsequent interpretation, not as external rules of conduct, but as an inward attitude, all in Sueki's view exerted a decisive impact on later developments. "Considered from the standpoint of intellectual history, it is the Buddhism of the early Heian period that forms the basis of later Japanese Buddhism, including Kamakura Buddhism. We may say that Kamakura Buddhism represents the development, in the form of discourses about practice, of the theoretical basis established in early Heian Buddhism" (9–10).

Sueki's chief arguments are set out in Part I, "Exoteric and Esoteric," or *ken* and *mitsu*. These are of course the key terms in the "theory of the exo-esoteric system" (*kenmitsu taisei ron* 顕密体制論), the model of medieval Japanese

Buddhism put forth by the late historian Kuroda Toshio 黒田俊雄 (1926–1993) (for an introduction to Kuroda's work see DOBBINS 1996), and the volume is informed by Sueki's methodological differences with certain aspects of *kenmitsu taisei* theory. Sueki highly evaluates Kuroda's work for its integral view, enabling politics, economics, art, ritual, and temple organization to be understood within a single, comprehensive framework. However, he finds that it shares with many earlier historical studies of Kamakura Buddhism a limited understanding of Buddhism's intellectual side. This common shortcoming has resulted, in his view, from an unfortunate methodological divide within Buddhist studies in Japan among Buddhologists, sectarian scholars, and historians. Buddhologists, reluctant to trespass on sectarian turf, have tended to concentrate on Indic Buddhism, while sectarian scholars, though well versed in doctrine, are often committed to upholding particular orthodoxies—thus leaving the critical study of Japanese Buddhism thought to historians, who lack detailed knowledge of Buddhist thought. As its subtitle indicates, Sueki's new volume is in part a plea for greater methodological exchange, especially between the domains of intellectual and institutional history.

One major set of questions Sueki poses vis-à-vis Kuroda's *kenmitsu* theory concerns its fundamental category of *mikkyō* 密教, or esoteric Buddhism. For Kuroda, the adoption of esoteric ritual by all Buddhist schools was what linked the major temple-shrine complexes in a loose unity or *taisei*; the perceived thaumaturgic power of esoteric rites enabled the incorporation of local religious culture, such as kami cults, divination, and the pacification of angry spirits (*goryō*) into a universalized Mahāyāna framework. At the same time, the magical protection offered by such rites secured for Buddhist institutions the support of wealthy patrons, who made donations of land in exchange, eventually enabling temple-shrine complexes to acquire significant economic and political power in medieval society. However, as Sueki notes, "*mikkyō*" is a complex and multivalent category whose meaning changed over time and whose relationship to "*kengyō*" 顕教 or exoteric teachings was theoretized by medieval scholars in widely varying ways. In early Heian times, in the thought of Kūkai, *mikkyō* was understood as the language and activity of the cosmic Buddha in his self-enjoyment body, inaccessible to ordinary people. But by the end of the period, it was increasingly understood as a mode of access to the Buddha's power especially suited to ordinary worldlings—as seen, for example, in the spread from the tenth century on of the *kōmyō shingon* 光明真言 or mantra of light, said to remove sins, heal sickness, and ensure the salvation of the dead. The latter Heian, Sueki notes, also saw a move among Tendai scholars to reassert the authority of exoteric teachings. For example, the exegete Hōchi-bō Shōshin 宝地房証真 (fl. late 12th, early 13th century) ranked exoteric teachings equally with esoteric ones, but said that, in the Final Dharma age, *mikkyō* serves as a "skillful means possessing form" (*usō no hōben* 有相の方便) that can assist ordinary worldlings in accessing the formless exoteric principle of calming and contemplation (*shikan*). Alternatively, Enni 円爾 (a.k.a., Bennen 弁円 or Shōichi Kokushi 聖一国師, 1202–1280), a Tendai pioneer in the introduction of Zen, saw *mikkyō* as superior to *kengyō* but relegated

both to the category of doctrinal teachings, inferior to the wordlessness of Zen. Thus a close examination of medieval doctrinal works will not always support Kuroda's contention that *mikkyō* was inevitably deemed superior or fundamental. Sueki offers this as a case in point where an intellectual-historical perspective yields a different narrative than an approach stressing political, institutional, or economic factors, and argues for increased conversation between the two methods.

A second point of Sueki's critique is directed not at Kuroda's own work, but at aspects of its interpretation developed by Taira Masayuki, hailed by many as Kuroda's intellectual successor. Specifically, Sueki is critical of Taira's reading of the Kamakura new Buddhist movements of Hōnen, Shinran, Nichiren, etc.[1] Mainstream postwar historiography saw these new Buddhist movements as representative of medieval Japanese Buddhism, replacing a decadent, elitist, outmoded "old Buddhism," understood as an archaic remnant of earlier times. Kuroda instead demonstrated that the representative form of medieval Buddhism was the *kenmitsu taisei*, an active and powerful form differing markedly from Nara and early Heian Buddhism and constituting the side of orthodoxy (*seitō-ha* 正統派) in doctrinal, ideological, and institutional terms. The new movements in no way displaced it but existed on its periphery as "marginal heterodoxies" (*itan-ha* 異端派). A particular strength of Kuroda's argument, in Sueki's estimation, is that it undercuts simplistic oppositions between "new Buddhism" and "old Buddhism" and enables both orthodox and heterodox elements to be seen in their interconnectedness within a single medieval framework. Kuroda, Sueki says, refused to draw rigid distinctions between establishment Buddhism and the new movements, noting, for example, points of continuity between the *itan* followings of Hōnen, Shinran, etc., and the activities of reformers (*kaikaku-ha* 改革派) and also *hijiri* within the *kenmitsu* establishment. In contrast, Taira draws a sharp distinction between the *kenmitsu* establishment and the marginal heterodoxies that opposed it. Taira's reading is a highly ideological one, which regards the universal, exclusive truth claims of the new Buddhism—that only the *nenbutsu* (or the *daimoku*) leads to salvation—as an implicit challenge to *kenmitsu* orthodoxy, its ritual efficacy, and the system of rule that it legitimated. In Sueki's estimation, however, Taira's reading undoes the nuance and flexibility of Kuroda's approach, obscuring complex interactions, shared developments and blurry areas and instead reducing the picture of medieval Buddhism to two inflexibly opposed camps.[2] However one may admire their spiritual legacy, the new movements were, numerically, a rather small element in the Kamakura Buddhist landscape, and Sueki expresses concern that exclusive focus on new Buddhist resistance to orthodoxy in effect reduces the *kenmitsu*

[1] A version of this part of the book has appeared in English (SUEKI 1996). See also TAIRA 1996.

[2] In response to an earlier version of Sueki's critique, Taira argues that what Sueki sees as Kuroda's "flexibility" actually represents an vague area in Kuroda's theory, in that he failed to distinguish adequately between the new, *itan* movements and reform efforts within *kenmitsu* Buddhism. His own position, he says, represents a clarification of Kuroda's position, rather than a reification, as Sueki charges (TAIRA 1997, p. 48).

system—the representative Buddhism of the period—to a mere backdrop against which to display the activities of a few great heterodox thinkers and their marginal followings. Such an approach reverts, he says, although in different terminology, to the problematic "new Buddhism centered" approaches of the postwar period—a stance Sueki has deliberately caricatured as "new Buddhism equals the good guys, and old Buddhism, the bad guys" (50).

Sueki seeks to avoid what he calls "transcendental evaluation" (*chōetsuteki hyōka* 超越的評価), an uncritical imposition onto an earlier age of the historiographer's own stance (such as, say, a Marxist-informed social progressivism). He notes that shifts since the postwar period in scholarly depictions of the new Buddhism—from a triumphant "Buddhism of the people" to a few courageous but isolated heterodox thinkers on the fringes of a hegemonic *kenmitsu* establishment—closely mirror the postwar fortunes of the intellectual left, and warns against reading contemporary social concerns back into the Kamakura era. Despite their soteriologically egalitarian views, Hōnen and Shinran were not social reformers, and it is one-sided to focus upon them only in terms of their resistance to hierarchical authority (402–408). Sueki is not so naive as to think that history can be written in a way that is ideology-free, but he stresses the need for continual effort on the historiographer's part to be aware of the interpretive impact of one's own ideological commitments (52–53).

It should be noted here that Taira Masayuki is by no means the only significant post-Kuroda scholar of medieval Japanese Buddhism to see the followings of Hōnen, Dōgen, Shinran, and Nichiren as radically opposed to the *kenmitsu* establishment. For example, Sasaki Kaoru 佐々木 馨 and Satō Hiroo 佐藤弘夫, although from different perspectives, have also stressed a sharp ideological polarization between mainstream Buddhist institutions and the marginal heterodox movements. In fact, though explicitly directed only at Taira, what Sueki criticizes here would seem to be nothing less than the currently predominant scholarly model of Kamakura Buddhism. For that very reason, one hopes to see, in subsequent works by Sueki or others, a fleshing out of the alternate perspective that he suggests, exploring specific commonalities, interactions, and overlaps that would complicate and refine the picture of sharp opposition between new and old, or heterodox movements and orthodox establishment.

The next three sections of the book shift from these broader concerns to close textual study of specific topics and can be read independently. Part II, on Hōnen, traces the process of Hōnen's intellectual development by which he arrived at his understanding of the chanted *nenbutsu* as the only soteriologically efficacious practice, "chosen exclusively" by the Buddha Amida himself. Sueki links this argument for "exclusive choice" of the *nenbutsu* to longstanding tensions in Tendai hermeneutics between the positions of "absolute subtlety" (*zettai-myō* 絶対妙), in which all practices, just as they are, are identified with the One Vehicle, and "relative subtlety" (*sōtai-myō* 相対妙), in which the One Vehicle is seen as superior to and superceding all other forms. Sueki's use of the categories of "tolerance" and "intolerance" to elucidate these two positions does not seem altogether appropriate, as the inclusive

stance often represents less of a "tolerance" to other positions than a "subsume and conquer" strategy for assimilating other positions within one's own. Nonetheless, he makes a key contribution here in suggesting that Hōnen's "single-practice" orientation had precedents in earlier Tendai hermeneutical thought. This is the kind of insight that Sueki's emphasis on intellectual history can yield, one that will not be apparent when Hōnen's exclusive *nenbutsu* teaching is seen solely as a form of resistance to the religio-political establishment. Also of great interest is Sueki's analysis of the different interpretive strategies adopted by Hōnen's disciples in their attempts to reconcile the exclusive *nenbutsu* stressed in Hōnen's mature work, the *Senchaku hongan nenbutsu shū* 選択本願念仏集, with other, widespread "miscellaneous practices" also said to lead to birth in the Pure Land. Here, however, one would like to know more about the institutional and social settings in which these different strategies were located—an instance calling for the very sort of dialogue between intellectual and institutional history that Sueki advocates.

Part III, on Myōe, includes a very helpful review of previous scholarship. Sueki's own discussion focuses on Myōe's recommendation of the *bukkōkan* 仏光観, a meditation in which the practitioner visualizes the light emanating from Vairocana Buddha to illuminate and encompass all worlds. While drawing on continental Huayan thinkers, Myōe also saw this visualization as a way of recreating the Buddha's presence in the final Dharma age (*mappō*). Sueki investigates the place of this practice in the development of Myōe's thought, in terms of its relation to his teachings concerning both the *kōmyō shingon*, which Myōe would stress especially in his later years, and the relationship of esoteric to exoteric Buddhism. Myōe well illustrates Sueki's argument about the complexity of medieval theorizing about this relationship: Myōe sometimes regards the esoteric teachings as superior, while elsewhere he argues that esoteric and exoteric are essentially equal and should be adopted according to the practitioner's capacity; or that the *kōmyō shingon*, an esoteric mantra, is a sort of skillful means enabling one to arrive at the exoteric *samadhi* of the Buddha's light (266).

The fourth section concerns the influential but still inadequately understood medieval Tendai doctrine of original enlightenment, which is connected to intellectual developments in both *kenmitsu* Buddhism and the new Kamakura movements.[3] Efforts to date *hongaku*-related works and place them in historical

[3] Sueki urges (34–36) that the work of Tamura Yoshirō 田村芳朗 (1921–1989)—which posits a shared intellectual foundation for the new Kamakura Buddhist movements in Tendai original enlightenment thought—be reevaluated for its potential to serve as a bridge between Kamakura new-Buddhism centered approaches and the *kenmitsu taisei* theory. Tamura privileges postwar stereotypes of "new Buddhism" as reformist—arguing for example that the new Buddhist thought evolved dialectically out of Tendai *hongaku* doctrine, resolving along the way its moral ambiguities and alleged tendency toward "uncritical world affirmation" (STONE 1999, pp. 85–92). Nonetheless, his work is indeed useful for illuminating common intellectual trends in medieval Japanese Buddhism, across sectarian and institutional boundaries. Sueki, I believe, envisions the continuation of this project without Tamura's new-Buddhism centered bias. Here, too, he takes a position contrasting with that of Taira, who sees the Kamakura heterodox thinkers as implacably opposed to *hongaku* thought (TAIRA 1996, p. 445).

context are enormously complicated by the fact that many of the relevant texts are apocryphal, attributed retrospectively to great Tendai masters of earlier ages. Along with Ōkubo Ryōshun 大久保良峻 and Hanano Michiaki 花野充昭, Sueki is one of the leading figures active in this area of research. This section of the volume includes close studies of the *Honmushōji ge* 本無生死偈 (Verses on original no-birth-or-death), including Sueki's newly edited version of the text held by Kanazawa Bunko; the *Myōgyōshin yōshū* 妙行心要集 (Essentials on the mind of subtle practice), a text attributed to Genshin 源信 (942–1017), important to an understanding of Pure Land *hongaku* thought; and three works, probably of the late Kamakura period, attributed to Chūjin 忠尋 (1065–1138) and said to be his commentaries on teachings transmitted orally from Nanyue Dashi Huisi 南岳大師慧思 to his disciple Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), founder of the Tiantai school. This section also contains Sueki's response to the modern movement of Critical Buddhism (*hihan Bukkyō* 批判仏教), which opposes original enlightenment thought on normative grounds (for an English version of this response see Sueki 1997).

Sueki rightly notes that "original enlightenment thought" is not an internally consistent category but consists of two major strands: one that absolutizes phenomena just as they are, as the inseparable manifestations of ultimate reality; and another that absolutizes mind as a generative principle producing the phenomenal world.[4] Though he does not trace their antecedents here, these probably derive, respectively, from Tiantai understanding of the mind and all phenomena as always mutually inclusive and simultaneous, and Huayan notions of an original pure mind that, coming into contact with defilements, gives rise to differentiated phenomena. Sueki suggests that the second position, that of absolute mind, was eventually elevated above the first via a hierarchical classification of teachings known as the "fourfold rise and fall" (*shijū kōhai* 四重興廃), set forth in the *Kankō ruijū* 漢光類聚, probably dating from the late thirteenth century. This classification ranks above all textual or doctrinal teachings the ineffable category of "mind contemplation" or *kanjin* 観心 (see Stone 1999, pp. 168–75)—possibly, Sueki suggests, under the

[4] It is not clear to me whether Sueki is suggesting that the stance valorizing of all phenomena "just as they are" as manifestations of original enlightenment was superceded historically by notions of original enlightenment as an absolute mind that is prior to phenomena, or simply that the "absolute mind" position is given priority in the context of the "fourfold rise and fall." Either hypothesis would be useful as a guide to further study. My cursory impression is that a number of late Kamakura/Muromachi-period Tendai texts dealing with original enlightenment, such as the "orally transmitted teachings" (*kuden hōmon* 口伝法門) of the Eshin school 恵信流 setting forth the "threefold seven great matters" 三重七箇の大事, take as their organizing principle the threefold truth, in which there is no pure mind prior to phenomena; rather all things are without independent essence (emptiness), arising provisionally in dependence upon conditions (conventional existence), and both simultaneously (the middle). In addition, the category of *kanjin*, the highest term in the fourfold rise and fall, carries a range of meanings. It can, as Sueki notes—and often does—indicate an *a priori* absolute mind, but it can also mean meditative or subjective insight or even faith (as opposed to doctrinal understanding), or simply the hermeneutical perspective of original enlightenment (in contrast to that of *shikaku* 始覚, or enlightenment acquired through a linear process of cultivation), when brought to bear upon the interpretation of texts (a so-called "*kanjin* reading").

influence of Chan/Zen teachings. He argues strongly here for the likelihood of Zen influence on medieval *hongaku* notions of mind, but also asserts that Dōgen's (1200–1253) famous criticisms of the "Śrenika heresy"—belief in an inner "spiritual intelligence" (*reichi* 霊知) that outlives one body to be reborn in another—was aimed, not at medieval Tendai *hongaku* doctrine, as has often been suggested, but at developments within Japanese Zen (297–99). Readers interested in issues related to original enlightenment thought or Critical Buddhism will welcome these chapters.

Sueki's volume is of great value, not only for its close textual studies of issues in the thought of Hōnen, Myōe, and original enlightenment texts, but more broadly, for its highlighting of the need for closer communication between the methods of intellectual and institutional history. His book should be read by anyone interested in ongoing scholarly questions of how medieval Japanese Buddhism is defined.

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