

REVIEWS

Anthropology of Tibet and the Himalaya. Edited by Charles Ramble and Martin Brauen. Ethnologische Schriften Zürich 12. Zürich: Ethnological Museum of the University of Zurich, 1993. pp. 441.

The present volume represents the fruits of an international seminar focusing on anthropology and ethnography in the field of Tibetology and Himalayan studies, held in Zurich in 1990. The organization of this seminar was initially planned by a group of scholars and students who all felt the need for a forum devoted to these areas of Tibetan studies, which for too long have been neglected by traditional Tibetology with its almost exclusive focus on textual and philologically based research. Such an initiative must therefore be warmly welcomed, an endeavour which goes hand in hand, incidentally, with similar initiatives such as the recent establishment of an association for ethnological research on Tibet and the Himalayan countries set up at the Institute of Tibetology, University of Vienna.

In the preface to the present volume it is stipulated that the step in no way should be regarded as a schism away from the more classical disciplines of Tibetology. Deeming the overall character of research publications and the topics presented at conferences such as the International Association of Tibetan Studies, papers with an anthropological approach and sociological tenor are still, in terms of their numbers, poorly represented. The conveners therefore had good reason to take this step. They had moreover resolved to introduce another focus aside from Tibet, namely by including anthropological and related topics covering the entire Himalayan (mainly Nepalese) region, both geographically, ethnically, culturally, and historically. The wisdom behind the introduction of this shift of focus is on the other hand far more questionable, in that we are presented with a confusing mixture of papers which cover not only highly disparate subjects, but are moreover often thematically totally unrelated. The editors would probably defend themselves by arguing that Tibetological anthropologists are few indeed and that focusing exclusively on Tibet would exclude quite a number of scholars who carry out promising and interesting research in areas bordering on or which are somehow related to Tibet. This is perhaps quite understandable, especially in the light of the fact that to carry out ethnographical and sociological fieldwork in Tibet proper is still anything else than easy. Nevertheless, the

reader of the present volume is left with a rather diffuse impression of the monograph. One wonders whether it would be recommendable in the future to focus on Tibet and the Tibetan-speaking areas of China, India, Bhutan and Nepal, etc., which are in a Tibetan cultural sphere of influence, and leave out papers which are related to purely non-Tibetan material. The number of papers dedicated to studies in matters Nepalese or which reflect its rich ethno-cultural patchwork could easily constitute a separate volume. The Tibetan-speaking areas of the Himalayas are still enormous and offer rich possibilities for carrying out fieldwork, and the number of researchers active in this field is quite astonishing.

Another more serious objection which may be raised is the general scholarly quality of the papers presented. No criteria of evaluation or inclusion have apparently been applied by the editors. In my opinion, this corpus of contributions varies from a few very good articles, to a number of readable pieces, to what would appear to be student exercises and redundant fillers. The contributions by the Chinese researchers are here particularly meagre. Our Chinese colleagues will either not demonstrate what they really know or write, or, more probable, being generally unaware of the high level of Western Tibetology, they fob us off with what appear to be academic trivialities or, equally often, offer us a pale *réchauffé* of results traced in Western research translated into Chinese. The fluctuating quality of Chinese research on Tibetological material is, however, not unknown.

Judging from the amount of misspellings of Tibetan terms and expressions in a number of articles related to Tibet, it would appear that many anthropologists display a certain unfamiliarity with the Tibetan language. This is perhaps a general problem. Beyond these remarks, the initiative is after all so laudable that the reviewer has decided to list here all the numerous small-sized papers and articles (thirty-nine items) published in this book, in order, in spite of their highly uneven quality, to give the reader a glimpse at least of the wealth and scope of research conducted in the field.

The monograph is opened by M. Allen, whose article is called, "Hierarchy and Complementarity in Newar Eating Arrangements", pp. 11–18, in which he discusses the role and importance of commensality in Newar social life. B. N. Aziz, in her article "Shakti Yogamaya: A Tradition of Dissent in Nepal", pp. 19–29, attempts to throw a little light on the life and rebellious activities of one Nepalese female named Shakti Yogamaya. M. Calkowski has a short, but readable, paper entitled, "Contesting Hierarchy: On Gambling as an Authoritative Resource in Tibetan Refugee Society," pp. 30–8, where the concept of gambling (poker and mahjong seem to be preferred) in Tibetan refugee society is discussed, giving us elucidating comments on key idioms such as *bsod nams*, *rlung rta* and *dbang thang*. K. Cech, "The Social and Religious Identity of the Tibetan Bonpos", pp. 3948, continues the long-debated discussion concerning a proper definition of (the) Bon(-po) vis-à-vis Buddhism. D. R. Dahal, in his "Anthropology of the Nepal Himalaya: A Critical Appraisal",

pp. 49–59, attempts to delineate the highlight of anthropological research in Nepal over the last thirty years, whereas H. Diemberger’s contribution, entitled “Gangla Tshechu, Beyul Khenbalung: Pilgrimage to Hidden Valleys, Sacred Mountains and Springs of Life Water in Southern Tibet and Eastern Nepal”, pp. 60–72, is a paper reflecting the results of her field-studies in the remote mKhan-pa-lung, a “hidden land” connected with Guru Rinpoche situated in the eastern part of Nepal along and across the border to Tibet. Dr. Gelek, Beijing, has a short paper entitled, “The Tibetan Plateau—One of the Homes of Early Man”, pp. 73–9, and N. Grist’s contribution, “Muslim Kinship and Marriage in Ladakh”, pp. 80–92, is a short paper on the Muslim population in Ladakh. S. von der Heide, in her paper, “From ‘British Naturalism’ to Abstract Modern Painting in Nepal”, pp. 93–100, gives us a brief survey of the development of modern Nepalese painting. R Herdick’s “Remarks on the Orientation of the Large Stupa in the Kathmandu Valley: A Discussion of Principles of Lunar Ordering”, pp. 101–23, is an impressively concise and competent survey of the orientation or direction of Kathmandu’s stupas analysed in relation to the movements of the moon. Next comes H. Ishii’s “Agricultural Labour Recruitment among the Newars and other Groups in the Sub-Himalayan Areas”, pp. 124–37, followed by W. Kahlen’s “Thang-stong rgyal-po—A Leonardo of Tibet”, pp. 138–49. I do not know how many times I have now seen this same article by Kahlen published, it does not bring anything new and it hardly belongs in an academic publication.

Samten G. Karmay’s “The Wind-horse and the Well-being of Man”, pp. 150–7, is a very informative paper on the meaning, imagery and ritual of *rlung rta*. Following suit are brief papers or notes by A. Kazmi, “The Ethnic Groups of Baltistan”, pp. 158–64, T. T. Lewis, “Himalayan Frontier Trade: Newar Diaspora Merchants and Buddhism”, pp. 165–78, and A. Loseries, “Charnel Ground Traditions in Tibet: Some Remarks and Observations”, pp. 179–92, who gives us a brief survey of a number of charnel grounds situated across Tibet, as well as a description of a so-called sky burial witnessed by the author. His article is followed by Ma Lihua’s brief note, called “Shamanic Belief among Nomads in Northern Tibet”, pp. 193–7; by G. G. Maskarinec, “Flatter, Promise, Threaten, Kill: A Discursive Analysis of Shamanic Mantar”, pp. 198–207; and by E. L. McHugh, “Culture and the Transformation of Suffering among the Gurungs of Nepal”, pp. 208–14. G. Meier’s short note, “Sammlungen der Missionare der Herrnhuter Brüder-Mission aus Ladakh—Inhalt und Standorte”, pp. 215–21, calls our attention to the impressive research on Tibetology conducted by the Moravian missionaries, par excellence by H. A. Jäschke and A. H. Francke. It should here be noted that H. Walravens and M. Taube recently have issued a survey of the collection of Tibetan books and prints kept in the archives at Herrnhut.¹

¹ *August Hermann Francke und die Westhimalaya-Mission der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde: Eine Bibliographic mit Standortnachweisen der tibetischen Drucke. With a Contribution by*

B. D. Millers note, “Is There Tibetan Culture(s) Without Buddhism?”, pp. 222–8, is then followed by M. Mühlich’s “Complementary and Hierarchical Aspects of Brahman-Chetri Social Structure”, pp. 229–37, and R. K Nepali’s “Culturally Appropriate Development: An Anthropological Study of Villages in Eastern Nepal”, pp. 238–47. M. Oppitz’s “Drongo”, pp. 248–57, is a highly interesting essay on the drongo or the King Crow, a protagonist in many Nepalese myths. B. M. Owens’ article is called “Blood and Bodhisattva: Sacrifice among the Newar Buddhists of Nepal”, pp. 258–69; and is followed by J. Pfaff-Czarnecka’s contribution, “The Nepalese Durgā Pūjā Festival, or Displaying Political Supremacy on Ritual Occasions”, pp. 270–86. The paper by one of the editors, Charles Ramble, “Rule by Play in Southern Mustang”, pp. 287–301, represents a small part of a wider study of a community conducted in the Mustang district of Nepal. It is a lucid discussion on the aleatoric mechanism that guides the annual recruitment and selection of the local headmen; Ramble draws here on interesting parallels to ancient Tibetan kingship.

The long-term endeavours of the Central Asian Seminar, Bonn (sponsored by the German Research Society), to catalogue all Tibetan and Mongolian ethnographical artefacts and material found in all the major museums in Europe, is the topic of Hans Roth’s small paper, “The Central Asian Archive in Bonn and the Catalogue of the [*sic*] Tibetan and Mongolian Culture”, pp. 302–7. The aim is to publish a catalogue which offers a type-bound classification of the different objects, a survey which details the handling, function, identification, and registration of similar items in the various collections throughout Europe. Needless to say, this initiative undertaken by the Bonn researcher will eventually prove to be of crucial importance for any scholar working on material culture among the peoples of Central Asia. U. Sagaster’s paper, “Observations Made During the Month of Muharram, 1989, in Baltistan”, pp. 308–17, is succeeded by G. Samuel’s almost apologetic paper, “Shamanism, Bon and Tibetan Religion”, pp. 318–30, where the author continues the long-standing debate whether (early) Bon should be designated “shamanistic” or not and the complex question as to the right definition of *bon vis-à-vis chos pa* and *mi chos*. His paper is followed by A. Schenk, “Inducing Trance: On the Training of Ladakhi Oracle Healers”, pp. 331–42, and Chr. Schicklgruber, “Who Marries Whom, and Why, among the Khumbo”, pp. 343–63, where the author discusses the marriage customs of the Khumbo-s, a Tibetan-speaking ethnic group of agriculture and stock farmers in north-eastern Nepal. In succession follow then K. Seeland’s “Sanskritisation and Environmental Perception among Tibeto-Burman Speaking Groups”, pp. 354–63, P. Sharma, “Caste Societies in the State of Nepal: A Historical Perspective”, pp. 364–76, and M. Trewin, “Lha-rnga: A Form

of Ladakhi ‘Folk’ Music and its Relationship to the Great Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism”, pp. 377–85, who offers us a good glimpse into the musical and ritualistic structure of the *lha rnga* genre. R. Vohra, “Antiquities on the Southern Arteries of the Silk Route: Ethnic Movements and New Discoveries”, pp. 386–405, gives us details on a number of rock-carvings or petroglyphs which may be helpful for the determination of the ethnic migration throughout the centuries in the southernmost part of the Silk Route. P. Webster’s “Some Epistemological Aspects of Caste among the Newars in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal”, pp. 406–24, is followed by E. Wehrli’s “Tibet Research in China by Tibetans and Chinese after 1949”, pp. 425–32, which may be seen as a brief supplement to an earlier contribution by the present reviewer.² The monograph is closed by a brief note by Yang En-hong entitled, “The Forms of Chanting Gesar and the Bon Religion in Tibet”, pp. 433–41.

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Stan Royal Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue: Tibetan Lamas and Gurung Shamans in Nepal. New Directions in Anthropological Writing*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. pp. 294. (Reprint: Kathmandu: Tiwar’s Pilgrims Book House, 1990. pp. 286).

The monograph is the outcome of a three-year sojourn dedicated to anthropological fieldwork, undertaken in the Gyasumdo region of Nepal, along the Tibetan border. The area of the author’s research encompassed two villages separated by the Marsyandi river, and turned out to be a most fortunate choice. One bank housed Tibetan communities, inhabited by Tibetans adhering to the creed of the rNying-ma school who had migrated into the region from Tibet during the last centuries. The villages on the opposite bank were occupied by Gurung communities, who mainly maintained their indigenous shamanic tradition. The anthropologist could therefore witness firsthand a unique encounter, or indeed clash, between Buddhist lamas and Gurung shamans. The Gurungs, originally Tibetans themselves, may well be carriers of some form of pre-Buddhist ritual pattern once prevalent in Tibet, a point even acknowledged by the Gurung shamans themselves. This old shamanic layer was challenged in a manner which bore an analogy to the confrontation in ancient Tibet between Buddhism and the indigenous pre-Buddhist beliefs.

The author explicates vividly and with novelty the interaction and interpenetration between the two religious traditions, casting light on the various rival offerings to serpent and guardian spirits, the exorcising of demons,

² *A Provisional List of Tibetological Research-Papers and Articles published in the People’s Republic of China and Tibet*, Nepal Research Centre Publications, No. 17, Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1991.

soul-calling, as well as the mechanism of divination and Tibetan horoscope and the ritual guidance of the deceased. The details and the analyses offered concerning these ceremonies must be regarded as a very fine piece of scholarship. They also constitute a major contribution to our knowledge of Tibetan village lamaism and its permutations and adaptation vis-à-vis an alien religious and ritual tradition. The material on Tibetan demonolatry, demonology and exorcism are a welcome addition to the material already collected and analyzed foremost by Nebesky-Wojkowitz in his pioneering, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*.

Where the ethnographical fieldwork conducted by Mumford is thus laudable, the book is gravely marred by the additional use of lofty theories drawn from a number of modern theorists, such as C. Geertz and, in particular, M. Bakhtin, a Russian literary critic from the beginning of this century. The incessant use of speculative notions and a jargon that paralyses the uninitiated reader—expressions such as “unbounded and bounded cultures”, “chronotypes”, “dialogic interactions”, “ancient matrix” “world spirit”, etc.— however interesting they may be in their own right, eventually turns reading into a trying experience which devalues the conclusions and spoils an otherwise fine book. The predilection towards theorizing and speculating on matters out of context, sometimes to the extent of destroying them, is a nuisance to which anthropologists are particularly prone. Often bereft of a philological background, anthropologists moreover often lack a sound command of the language or medium spoken or written by the people or the community among whom they carry out their research. The present book is no exception to this. It is therefore also marred by a succession of misspellings or wrong translations. To mention a few (the references are to the reprint), *pe* : *dpe* (pp. 45, 144, 183); *dus ngen pa* : *dus ngan pa* (pp. 44, 131, 140, 157, 228); *sin* : *srin* (p. 43); *rseg* : *sreg* (p. 57); *lem pa* : *glen pa* (p. 81); *chu brtse* : *chu rtse(d)* (p. 98); *lchags* : *lcags* and *bchu* : *bcu* (p. 106); *stod ra gtang* : *bstod pa btang* (p. 114); *shen pa* : *shan pa* (pp. 47, 131); *ngos* : *dngos* (p. 152); *bar cad* : *bar chad* (161); *bar chog* : *bar phyogs* (p. 183); *tshe sas song* : *tshe zad song* (p. 199); *sa* : *bza'* (p. 199); *chag kyu* : *lcags kyu* (p. 214); *dan* : *yon tan* (p. 239); *tags tshen dzen pa'i bden pa* : *rtags tsam 'dzin pa'i bden pa* (p. 239); *stong gsum* (p. 262) does not refer to the three worlds of emptiness, but in Buddhist cosmology to the concept of the Trichilio-megachilicosm.

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Adelheid Herrmann-Pfandt, *Ḍākinīs. Zur Stellung und Symbolik des Weiblichen im tantrischen Buddhismus*. Indica et Tibetica 20. Bonn 1992, pp. xv, 564. DM 120.–

The present study is an attempt to investigate the concept and symbolism of

the feminine and female divinity in Tantric Buddhism. The study must be welcomed, not only because it is a neglected topic (although scholarship in feminism in general has emerged as something of a discipline in its own right, however disputed), but also because of the study's own inherent qualities and the impressive thoroughness demonstrated by the author.

The study is made up of two parts, covering thirteen chapters altogether. The first two chapters are dedicated to a historical survey, in which an attempt is undertaken to sketch out the evolution behind some central, primarily terrifying and malevolent images associated with the female/feminine in the religious history of India. These various Indian notions of the female are then placed in a wider context, using archetypal symbols and models of gender derived partly from other cultures, partly from pre-contemporary or modern theories and notions of mythology, psychology and religion, traced in the writings of C. G. Jung and E. Neumann.

The remaining chapters are devoted a thorough evaluation of the *ḍākinī* as religious phenomena, paying adequate attention to its/her versatile manifestations, imagery, and functions. Chapter Three offers us a systematic survey of the various manifestations in which the *ḍākinī*-s are found, tracing here their possible origin (still largely nebulous, arguably non Indo-Aryan) and role in a Hindu and, above all, Buddhist religious context. The following chapters (fourth–twelfth), the lion's share of the book, are then devoted to a detailed and thematically systematic description of the changing functions ascribed to this medium, as found documented in canonical scripture as well as Indian, but mainly Tibetan, hagiographical and biographical writings. It is to the author's credit that we are offered a clear and comprehensive exposition of the *ḍākinī*'s role as instigator and *primus motor* in the lives of religious saints, bringing about mental and soteriologically decisive changes. They are depicted as spiritual guides that accompany the saints and the practitioner, exoterically as well as esoterically, from conception and birth until death and beyond. The author clearly demonstrates their many contradictory functions, as spiritual helpers and as menacers. Numerous passages culled from hagiographies shed light on the multifarious communicative roles allotted to the *ḍākinī*-s in connection with initiation and as a bestower of *siddhi*-s, as well as a terrifying menace for the adept's *exercitia spiritualia*. It thereby becomes very evident how important a role her different manifestations play in Tantric soteriology. As with anything else in Tantrism, the metamorphosis and different aspects of the *ḍākinī* should often be seen or conceived of as symbolic images representing the personal transformation and spiritual development that the practitioner or adept himself/Therself undergoes. Also important is the role played in connection with the mystical union, whether imaginary or real. Needless to say, this topos on sexual yoga and partnership in Tantric Buddhism has always attracted the interest of many scholars, but the contributions have not always been laudable. The author treats this topic informatively and soberly. In the last chapter, which

may be characterized as an essay, the author sums up her conclusions and attempts to see the material in a new light and in a broader perspective within the study of feminism.

The author demonstrates a good theoretical and philological handling of the difficult material, and errors in this respect are few and insignificant. However, the study also leaves room for objections. The work apparently tries to bridge various distinct disciplines: feminism, Jungian psychology, the history of religions, and Buddhism. But while the author obviously attempts to deal with her topic in a comprehensive way, such an approach is not unproblematic. Moreover, it is not seldom fraught with its own particular pitfalls, while the thematic, methodological and analytic implications—in encompassing and compounding various criteria and approaches from otherwise distinct disciplines—often eclipse or disfigure the conclusions, rather than enriching them. Comparative studies have become a very popular trend in academic circles in recent years, in the history of religions, too, but work on cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary analogies and parallels, and the comparative method in general, are, despite their fascination, a risky enterprise prone to speculation. Not that the present study is irreparably marred by this in any way, but its underlying tenor is quite perceivable. Judging from the material presented by the author, one could perhaps have recommended from the very outset that she keep things apart and consequently author two books: one that focuses on the bulk of autochthonous Indo-Tibetan material on *ḍākinī*-s, so skilfully and nigh on exhaustively dealt with by the author, simply by letting the material speak its own language; and another one dedicated to her vivid analytic interest and preoccupation with interpreting the historical and textual data by means of the framework and models of interpretations originally conceived by Jung and Neumann.

The monograph is written in a discursive, and as a consequence of the above fixation, at places even polemic and provocative style, but also with some gusto and with a compassionate enthusiasm governed by the author's (arguably justified) indignation. The author's almost obsessive resentment here no doubt stems from the discrimination under which the female sex suffered throughout history. The author is repeatedly preoccupied with an attempt to divulge a number of inconsistencies and historical imbalances apparently found in the tradition itself: the *ḍākinī* as a phenomenon is male-oriented and only makes sense for a male practitioner. But while this is a good, if evident, observation, the author is obliged to her readership to document that this is also historically and religiously relevant, for example by scrutinizing biographies and other relevant writings related to female saints as well as the pertinent iconographical tradition in order to demonstrate its factual relevance. One therefore occasionally acquires the impression that the study was thought of as a sort of continuing *plaidoyer* for female recognition and values, as if the author felt herself called upon to settle accounts with or to re-adjust former calamities and injustice in this respect. Reading

along and between the lines as well as other publications by the author, it is no doubt the author's real or dominating preoccupation.

Apart from these misgivings concerning the methodology chosen by the author, the book's positive features should not go unnoticed. Meticulously, Dr. Herrmann-Pfandt has worked through an enormous and varied amount of material that is in no way easy to penetrate, let alone to survey, and her analyses and presentation are usually characterized by lucidity and sound rationality. Deeming the popularity of the topic and the general ignorance of or the deplorable lack of command of scholarship in German among the English-speaking public, it could even be recommended that the book be translated into English, but in a re-worked and abbreviated version.

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Allan G. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1992. pp. xiv + 295.

In the last twenty years, some Japanese scholars (in particular, Kuroda Toshio, Murayama Shuichi, Hayami Tasuku, Amino Yoshihiko) have seriously begun to question received knowledge about Japanese religions and religiosity. Allan Grapard is perhaps the pioneer of such a critical approach in the West, with his seminal studies on sacred places, on ritual and ideology, on the combinatory epistemic framework of medieval Japanese religions. The specificity of his research work lies in the fact that he is able to combine a tenacious and insightful activity of interrogation of ancient sources with keen methodological and theoretical concerns.

This long-awaited book (it was completed in 1986, but the process of publication took inexplicably so many years) is the summa of Grapard's own research on Kasuga cultural systems up to the mid-1980s. Kasuga Taisha, located in Nara, at the foot of Mount Mikasa, was the main shrine of the Fujiwara family. During the whole pre-modern period, until the artificial, and forced, "separation of buddhas and kami" (*shinbutsu bunri*) was carried out at the beginning of the Meiji period, it has been closely related with the Kōfukuji, one of the main Buddhist centers of Nara, to constitute a complex and multifaceted institution which Grapard calls *multiplex*. The book analyses and describes in depth the nature and structure of the Kasuga-Kōfukuji *multiplex*, in the awareness that this is a general model for all other shrine-temple *multiplexes* in Japan.

The Introduction states the three fundamental hypotheses of this study. In the author's own words, "first, Japanese religiosity is grounded in specific sites at which beliefs and practices were combined and transmitted exclusively within specific lineages before they were opened to the general public"

(p. 4). This implies a general reconsideration of the concept of “religion” as it is applied to medieval Japanese culture. An accurate, interpretive approach to ancient documents reveals that medieval religiosity was centered on lineages of transmission at specific sites, and that therefore cults were strongly locale-specific.

Such a phenomenon also requires a revision of traditional sectarian denominations, and, on a more general level of the two major categorizations of Japanese religiosity: Shinto and Buddhism. This is in fact the second hypothesis, namely, “Japanese religiosity is neither Shintō nor Buddhist nor sectarian but is essentially combinative. The few exceptions appear to prove the rule” (p. 4). The idea of the existence of a “pure” Shinto and a “pure” Buddhism is a modern (post-Meiji) ideological construct. The study of pre-modern Japanese culture reveals instead a totally different picture: various kinds of combinations and associations of different elements “occurred at the institutional, ritual, doctrinal, and philosophical levels everywhere throughout Japanese history and formed the backbone not only of what has been called religion but also of Japanese culture in general” (p. 8). Cultic centers were “universes of meaning” (p. 9), “mindscapes” (p. 10), “centers of communication between distinct cultural systems issuing from India, China, Korea, and Japan” (p. 9). The combinatory systems which developed in those centers “were not arbitrary but obeyed what might be called rules of combination” which were linguistically structured (*ibidem*). The attention to the inner linguistic (or semiotic) rules governing such combinatory systems is one of the major points of interest in Grapard’s approach to Japanese traditional religiosity.

The third fundamental hypothesis of Grapard’s study is that “those combinative systems, which evolved in specific sites, were indissolubly linked, in their genesis as in their evolution, to social and economic structures and practices as well as to concepts of legitimacy and power, all of which were interrelated and embodied in rituals and institutions marking those sites” (p. 4). This is an important point, because Grapard’s analysis is not limited, like most studies on the subject, to an abstract realm of philosophical speculations (sectarian treatises or *honji suijaku* “theory”). On the contrary, the author shows the complex interplay between doctrines and rituals, cosmological and soteriological theories, and political and economical control of land. In other words, Grapard traces a masterful account of knowledge and power within the dominant discourse of medieval Japan. This is another major point of interest of the book.

The above central hypotheses of this study are examined thoroughly in the five chapters in which the book is articulated. It is to be pointed out that the author succeeds in giving a comprehensive account of the Kasuga-Kōfukuji multiplex without losing sight of its historical developments, “The Creation of the Ceremonial Center” explores origins and early structure of the Kasuga Shrine and the Kōfukuji. The author shows that, since its very

beginnings, the multiplex constituted a ceremonial centre embodying concepts of the state and social organization during the Nara period. “Kasuga Daimyōjin, Protector or Ruler?” investigates the rationales for the associations between the divinities of shrine and temple which generated the combinatory entity called Kasuga Daimyōjin. The author further shows that the organization of the multiplex during the Heian period gave birth to Nara as a sacred city. “Protocol: The Sociocosmic Organon” analyses the complex interrelations among the ritual, economic, and institutional aspects of the Kasuga cultural systems. “The Experience of Transcendence in Kasuga” gives an account for the historical and intellectual processes which enabled the combinatory system of the multiplex to produce the vision of Kasuga as a metaphysical landscape, a Buddha-land; this major cultural trait was related in turn to the developments of the concept of Japan as a sacred land (shinkoku). After an impressive description of the most grandiose moments of the cultural history of the Kasuga-Kōfukuji multiplex, “From Cult to Cultural Revolution” closes the book with an examination of the final evolution of the system during the Edo and Meiji periods—an efficacious account of the destruction of the medieval episteme.

Grapard’s study substantially and rigorously redefines the scope and boundaries of the “history of Japanese religions” as an academic field. But its importance lies also in the new problematics and perspectives that it opens for further research. I shall limit myself to mentioning here just a few points. For instance, Grapard gives an accurate description of the workings of the establishment and its official discourses. Still, it would also be interesting to analyse the whole system from a different perspective, from “below”, as it were. Further research should therefore also concern the relationships among Kasuga-Kōfukuji ceremonial centre and the other multiplexes of the same Hossō lineage “Kiyomizu-dera, Hōryūji, Yakushiji, Gangōji, etc.), in order to answer questions concerning the ways in which subordinate multiplexes embodied, structured and manifested the dominant socio-cosmology of medieval Japan.

Furthermore, Grapard analyses and describes at length the major rituals and festivals of the Kasuga-Kōfukuji multiplex, and shows that all activities of the multiplex—and its leading figures, such as the abbot Jinson (1430–1508), whose world is masterfully depicted on pp. 171–85—were rituals governed by complex protocols. It is not clear, however, to what extent such protocols affected the lives of common people. In the same way, with the only significant exception of the Wakamiya festival, which was open to all the people of the the Yamato province, rituals and festivals examined by Grapard in the book were generally dedicated to the Fujiwara family and to the protection of the state, symbolized by the Emperor’s body. At this point, another question arises, concerning rituals and ceremonies performed by monks of the shrine-temple for the general populace (funerals, lay ordinations, and so on): in which ways did they convey the universe of meaning that

they embodied? As Grapard underlines, much is still to be done concerning the Japanese cultic multiplexes. Nevertheless, further studies should also take into consideration the everyday world of peasants and ordinary people, in order to shed light on the extent to which their lives were affected by Fujiwara constructs of dominance embodied by the Kasuga-Kōfukuji multiplex, and on how they reacted to the episteme of the medieval Japanese establishment. In any case, there is no doubt that Grapard's ground-breaking work will form the basis of such research.

This important book, in line with Grapard's approach, is based on a revelatory questioning of neglected original sources in the light of deep critical and methodological awareness. Methodological concerns and critical metalanguage are not obstructive; they never silence the discourse-object, as sometimes happens with other studies belonging to the post-structuralist tradition. In Grapard's book heuristic and hermeneutic tools (an original approach to the semiotics of culture) are never an end in themselves, but are only ever applied in order to foster an accurate interpretive picture of the cultural situation under examination.

In this study, which amounts de facto to a sort of post-structural maṇḍala of the Kasuga Cult, through an in-depth analysis of the Kasuga model of Japanese medieval experience, Grapard traces a powerful fresco of a whole cultural system, showing in a clear and rigorous way the multi-levelled interrelations between knowledge, practice, and power, between religiosity, philosophical speculations, rituals, world-views, economic structures, and political systems of medieval Japan.

The book is definitely useful and necessary in classes on the intellectual and religious history of Japan, as an important contribution to deep cultural understanding.

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Ochiai Toshinori, *The Manuscripts of Nanatsu-dera: Recently Discovered Treasure-House in Downtown Nagoya*. With related remarks by Makita Tairyō and Antonino Forte, translated and edited by Silvio Vita. Italian School of East Asian Studies, Occasional Papers 3. Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura Scuola di Studi sull' Asia Orientale, 1991. pp. xi + 102 + 18 illustrations.

In the field of Buddhist Studies, the discovery of ancient manuscripts occurs but rarely. One of the more recent major discoveries of manuscript remains took place at Dunhuang at the turn of this century, prompting a new field of research now called "Dunhuang studies." Most of these materials were Buddhist in orientation and shed much new light on the doctrines, practices,

and history of the religion in China. The impact on scholarship of such a major discovery is indisputably immense.

Now, almost a century later, the scholarly world has been rocked by yet another significant discovery of Buddhist manuscripts, this time in Nagoya, Japan. What makes this event so important is that, first, the texts are copies of Nara manuscripts, rather than of printed texts as had been assumed previously, and, second, they include hitherto non-extant or unknown texts of Chinese provenance dating from as early as the fourth century. *The Manuscripts of Nanatsu-dera* by Ochiai Toshinori, and with contributions from Makita Tairyō and Antonino Forte, is the first report in English on the discovery. It relates the history of the manuscripts and the Nanatsu-dera (The Temple of Seven Halls) which houses them, provides an account of the discovery itself and its ramifications for future research, and offers a brief history and content analysis of fifteen texts from the cache, some of which had previously been lost or unrecorded.

The Nanatsu-dera and its manuscript canon owe their existence to the deputy governor of the Owari region (present-day Nagoya), A son of the Onakatomi Yasunaga (1110–78). The monastery complex, the foundation of which is attributed to Gyōki (668–749), was a reconstruction of an earlier one destroyed by fire during the rebellions of Taira no Masakado and Fujiwara no Sumitomo (tenth century). It was Yasunaga and his son-in-law, Chikazane, who donated the funds for the reconstruction. The canon was copied during the years A.D. 1175–80, to comply with a vow made also by Yasunaga. Most of the monastery complex was destroyed in a conflagration during an air raid in 1945, leaving only a brick structure specifically built for the canon in 1872. The canon, however, had already been moved to a safer place in the countryside during the previous year. The existence of the canon had been no secret to the scholarly community, even if its significance remained elusive. The canon was designated a National Treasure, although it was later demoted in 1950 to the rank of Important Cultural Property. These designations, however, were based solely on the age and artistic merit of the canon: copied during the Heian period, it is one of the oldest manuscript versions of the Buddhist canon in Japan; the manuscripts, consisting of 1,162 titles in 4,954 fascicles (*juan*, “rolls”), were written in beautiful calligraphy; they were stored in thirty-one Chinese-style lacquer chests with decorative paintings, also dating from the Heian (hence the canon is known as “The Chinese Chests Canon” [Karabitsu Issaikyō]). Its contents were not known in detail until the publication in 1968 of the catalogue, *Owari shiryō: Nanatsu-dera issaikyō mokuroku* [Owari Historical Sources: A Catalogue of the Nanatsu-dera Buddhist Canon], compiled by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Unfortunately, even this detailed list of contents seemed to have failed to attract scholars’ attention—as Makita, one of the first recipients of the catalogue and a specialist on Chinese Buddhist history, readily admits. He assumed wrongly that the canon was simply a copy of a printed edition

of the Chinese canon, the first of which dated from the years A.D. 971–83 (known as the Song Kaibao edition), some two centuries before the date of the present manuscripts. Even the presence of titles of extra-canonical works or Buddhist apocrypha, which are excluded from the printed Chinese canons, was overlooked.

As for Ochiai, who led the discovery, some ten years elapsed before he realized the true identity of the Nanatsu-dera manuscripts he had been examining. Ochiai first inspected some of the manuscripts in 1979, but assumed they were copied from a Song edition of a printed canon. Later he made a close examination of a text from the same canon, *Da Tangxiyu qiufa gaoseng zhuan* [Great Tang Account of the Eminent Monks who Searched for the Law in the Western Regions] by Yijing (635–713). The Nanatsu-dera manuscript of this text was one of the supporting documents he used in making a case that the text's original title was *Da Zhou xiyu xingren zhuan* [Great Zhou Account of the Men Who Went to the Western Regions]. During his examination, he discovered that the text showed closer affinities with a Nara manuscript kept in the Tenri University library and with the Koryō edition of the printed canon than with Chinese printed canons. Using this finding as a clue, Ochiai hypothesised that the rest of the canon might be connected to a manuscript tradition as well. His suspicion was strengthened when his colleague, Nagai Ryusho, pointed out that the canon's catalogue, *Owari shiryō*, included an entry for a *Jingdu jing* [Scripture of Pure Salvation], a variant title of a well known apocryphon, *Jingdu sanmei jing* [Scripture of Meditation on Pure Salvation]. If the canon belonged to the lineage of a printed canon, an entry for such a proscribed scripture would not have appeared. Makita, the major Japanese authority on Buddhist apocrypha and the author of the *Gikyō kenkyū* (Studies on Buddhist Apocrypha), the only monograph on the subject until the publication of *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, edited by Robert Buswell in 1991, was immediately contacted with this news, which, according to Forte, left him "dumbfounded". Subsequently, two surveys of the manuscripts were conducted at Nanatsu-dera in the summer of 1990. These not only confirmed Ochiai's hypothesis, but also revealed a number of texts which had been completely or partially lost, or which were otherwise unknown in historical records. Most of these texts are, or are speculated to be, apocryphal scriptures.

To understand the excitement of scholars about these manuscripts and to appreciate fully the significance of the discovery, it may be appropriate to insert here some brief historical background on the subject of Buddhist apocrypha.

Buddhist scriptures are the repository of the law (*dharma*), which is one of the three pillars of the Buddhist religion, together with the Buddha and the clergy (*samgha*). It is those three "jewels" which define the identity of the religion. Buddhist scriptures were therefore an integral part of Buddhist identity, but we have precious little evidence that Indians paid much atten-

tion to their history. Chinese Buddhists, on the contrary, left a series of bibliographical records (*jinglu*) once translation activities began during the second century and continued throughout subsequent centuries. The wealth of historical data preserved in these records, when critically used, not only serves as the basis for reconstructing the history of Buddhism in China, but also allows inferences to be made about the development of Indian Buddhism as well. The historical consciousness abundantly shown in these numerous records is more than an expression of a Chinese obsession with history. It is in part motivated by an agenda that is typically not given due consideration by modern scholars: the preservation in China of Indian Buddhist orthodoxy. Records of the translated scriptures were kept so as to prevent any extraneous materials from entering the Buddhist canon and circulating as authentic scripture (*zhengjing*). More precisely, the bibliographers' goal was to keep out texts of suspect origin (*yijing*) and outright forgeries (*weijing*), which are known collectively as "apocrypha" in Western scholarship. Those "purist" bibliographers had ample reasons to be concerned. Despite their successive efforts, sometimes made with the support of the court, apocryphal scriptures not only stubbornly resisted systematic attempts to proscribe and eradicate them, but they actually increased in number every generation. What finally ended this process of scriptural creation was the advent of printed canons during the tenth century. Handwritten manuscripts of unknown provenance could no longer portray themselves as authentic (viz., Indian or Serindian) Buddhist scriptures and wheedle their way into the canon. Fortunately for later historians of Buddhism, neither persistent persecutions nor the advent of printed canons completely eradicated apocryphal texts. Some of these texts found their ways to the desert cache of Dunhuang or to Japan, where they were preserved since the medieval period. Ochiai's present discovery adds considerably to the number of apocryphal texts already known to be extant in Japan.

Ochiai's discussion of fifteen texts consists mostly of apocryphal scriptures or texts suspected to be such. Two items are exceptions to this characterization. One is an inventory of an unusually large collection of scriptures (1,247 titles in 4,777 fascicles), which is tentatively titled, *Ko shōgyō mokuroku* [Old Catalogue of Holy Teachings]. The other, *Dasheng pusa rudao sanzong quan* [Three Kinds of Contemplation for Entering the Way of the Great Vehicle Bodhisattva] is a treatise which, according to Japanese records, is attributed to Kumārajīva. The remaining thirteen texts discussed are of three types: (1) titles appearing in Chinese catalogues, but the actual texts of which have been lost (a total of seven texts); (2) titles known in catalogues of which partial texts survived at Dunhuang (two titles); (3) titles unlisted in any Chinese or Japanese record (four titles). Below I will introduce three of the more important titles discussed by Ochiai.

The *Foshuo Fomingjing* [The Scripture of the Names of the Buddhas, Spoken by the Buddha] in sixteen fascicles appears in the list of apocrypha in

a Tang catalogue, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (A.D. 730) of Zhisheng. The text is modelled after a number of Indian scriptures which can be grouped together as *Foming jing* based on their content, which consists of doxologies of Buddhas' names. The Nanatsudera manuscript is almost complete; only fascicle nine belonged to a translated text, the twelve-fascicle version of the *Foming jing*. What is most significant about this recension is that it is the same as the text reconstructed by Inokuchi Taijun in 1964 based on the Dunhuang fragments. Although of little significance in terms of doctrine, texts of this genre played an important role in the Buddhist rituals of East Asia. Most notable among them is the Heian court ritual of *Butsumyōe* [Ceremony of the Names of the Buddhas] performed in the last month of the year to expiate the sins accumulated during the preceding year. Forte reports that the ritual is still performed annually in a Shingon temple near Nagoya, and that, prior to the discovery, the officiating priest simply "checked out" the manuscript from Nanatsudera for consultation without realizing its historical value.

The *Foshuo Qingjing faxing jing* [The Scripture on the Practice of the Pure Law, Spoken by the Buddha] is an incomplete text, but it is still a valuable finding since it had been known previously only through citations of brief passages. Its content is highly polemical, a typical feature of apocrypha: it declares that Xiaozhi (=Laozi), Confucius, and his disciple Yan Yuan (=Yan Hui) are all manifestations of the Buddha's disciples who were dispatched to China to edify the people. The text is an example of the religious rivalries that raged between the foreign religion of Buddhism and the indigenous traditions of Confucianism and Daoism.

From the standpoint of textual history, the *Foshuo Piluo sanmei jing* [The Scripture of *Piluo* Samādhi, Spoken by the Buddha], may be by far the most remarkable finding, as is reflected in the selection of its manuscript as the cover illustration of the monograph. The reason for this stature is its age. This title first appeared in the fourth-century inventory of suspect scriptures compiled by the renowned Chinese cleric Daoan (312–85), but except for a short passage quoted in the *Fayuan zhulin* (Taishō 2122) and elsewhere, nothing else had been known about the text. Now we have a two-fascicle text copied in Japan nearly a millennium after its compilation in China. This history renders the text arguably the oldest extant manuscript of a Buddhist apocryphon. No small wonder that all involved can hardly contain their excitement, as their reports in this monograph vividly show.

Where do the Nanatsudera manuscripts lead us? What is their historical value? These texts both raise a number of broad questions and help shed light on existing questions and issues concerning Buddhism in China and Japan. The manuscripts as a whole are excellent source materials on the state of Buddhism in medieval East Asia, contact between separate regions of China and Japan (and possibly Korea), and the nature and role of apocrypha. For example, Makita points out that because of the Owari provenance of the manuscripts, determining their origin and history will lead to better under-

standing of the dynamics of Japanese Buddhism of the Heian and earlier periods in areas outside the center of culture in Heiankyō (modern Kyoto). To find a stronghold of Buddhist faith in the area near Ise, the center of the Shinto cult, is in itself an barometer of the extent and depth of the spread of Buddhism in isolated areas. Investigation into the origins of the manuscripts will also illuminate much about the routes of scriptural transmission from China to Japan, about which we know little. The discovery should stimulate new research in the same vein as Ishida Mosaku's pioneering 1930 work, *Shakyō yori mitaru Narachō Bukkyō no kenkyū* [Studies on Nara Buddhism, Based on Manuscript Scriptures], which remains virtually the only study on this subject.

Furthermore, the apocryphal materials included in this canon also raise a whole set of more specific questions. Ochiai asks, for example, regarding the *Piluo sanmei jing*: “Why did the editor(s) of the Nanatsu-dera canon and the text from which it was copied take the trouble of copying a work which occurred in an inventory of apocryphal titles?” (p. 21). Similarly, concerning the *Foming jing*, Forte questions “why in Japan a text condemned in China by an authoritative figure of the monastic elite such as Zhisheng and therefore most likely forbidden both at court and elsewhere, was held in high esteem” (p. 65). These questions are but a fraction of what can, and should, be asked regarding the new discovery. Among other issues, for example, what was the extent of the circulation of apocrypha in China, which in turn enabled the manuscripts to be brought to Japan? Why and how did these scriptures survive periodic persecutions in China? What does orthodoxy mean in the context of East Asian Buddhism? Could texts not listed in historical records be of Japanese provenance? To answer these and other questions, which apply to most apocrypha, is to understand the dynamics of the religious movements that generated this type of scripture in all their aspects, from religious to historical, social, and political. The task demands nothing short of comprehensive textual and contextual studies employing interdisciplinary methodologies.

The perception of Buddhist apocrypha in modern scholarship has long been marred by an unwarranted bias against such texts, which in essence is the continuation of the stance of the “purist” bibliographers within the tradition. But the field has come a long way since the days of Yabuki Keiki and Mochizuki Shinkō, the vanguards in the study of Buddhist apocrypha. As Ochiai points out, this change in status is reflected in the suggestions of alternative, value-neutral designations, such as “scriptures composed in China” or “popular scriptures” instead of the “suspect” or “forged” designations of the traditional bibliographers. The change is also apparent in the most recent comprehensive history of Chinese Buddhism by Kamata Shigeo, who devotes a section to this subject in his volume on the Nanbei Chao. The Nanatsu-dera discovery is indeed a fortuitous event that occurred just as the study of Buddhist apocrypha began receiving due acknowledgement for what

it can add to Buddhist Studies specifically and to the study of religions in East Asia in general.

That the Nanatsu-dera discovery will prompt considerable advances in the field of East Asian Buddhism is already apparent. Ochiai and others established the Society for the Study of the Long Hidden Scriptures of Nanatsu-dera (Nanatsu-dera Koitsu Kyōten Kenkyū Kai), and a plan is underway to publish the results of their research in ten volumes in the *Nanatsu-dera koitsu kyōten kenkyū sōsho* (The Long Hidden Scriptures of Nanatsu-dera, Research Series). This discovery should also stimulate careful re-examination of manuscript holdings in temples and monasteries throughout Japan. To accomplish this task, needless to say, requires the full cooperation of all the Buddhist institutions concerned, something which has not always been forthcoming in the past. The skepticism of the keepers of cultural properties toward modern scholarship, coupled with their sense of responsibility to protect and preserve cultural treasures, has often obstructed or delayed academic research. The Nanatsu-dera discovery may help to change the perception of conflict between some scholars and religious.

The prompt publication of the present monograph in an English translation only one year after the initial discovery is indeed a welcome event for those who work in the West and who do not have easy access to the materials. Let us hope that this small but important report will be followed speedily by the volumes containing research results, which will no doubt bring new insights and perspectives on the nature and state of Buddhism in medieval East Asia.

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