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Iwata Fumiaki. *Kindai Bukkyō to seinen: Chikazumi Jōkan to sono jidai.* Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2014. 332 pp. JPY 3,600, cloth, ISBN 978-4-00-025988-0.

Ōmi Toshihiro. *Kindai Bukkyō no naka no Shinshū: Chikazumi Jōkan to kyūdōshatachi.* Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2014. 230 pp. JPY 3,000, cloth, ISBN 978-4-8318-6043-9.

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It is not yet widely enough recognized that there was intense intellectual activity in the large "heritage" Japanese Buddhist organizations as they adapted to the early twentieth century. An important example of this energy was the now relatively obscured religious studies scholar and Shin Buddhist educator Chikazumi Jōkan (1870-1941), who prominently inspired a number of modern young Japanese intellectuals, especially in the Taishō period. The two studies reviewed here are efforts to refocus attention on Chikazumi and reestablish a conception of his historical importance.

Iwata Fumiaki's more narrative study deals rather straightforwardly with the scholar's life and influence in a series of chronological and thematic chapters, delineating how Chikazumi straddled two eras. He was raised in a late Tokugawa/early Meiji Shin Buddhist social environment in the Kansai region near Lake Biwa, at the family temple Saigenji in Nagahama (Shiga Prefecture). Educated in a traditional manner by his father but with a new emphasis on the Tannishō text, which became conspicuous in modern Jōdo Shinshū, he was successful as a young student in Kyoto. With Kiyozawa Manshi's (1863-1903) recommendation he was sent, in 1890, for special higher school study in Tokyo, where over the following years he would encounter the circles of the leading Buddhist intellectuals of the day. He became deeply involved in the Bukkyō Seinenkai movement and with the contemporary definitional and political debates circulating around the question of "religion" (***shūkyō***). But he also suffered through episodes of spiritual anguish or breakdown (***hanmon***), which resulted in a deeper experiential commitment (***kaishin***) toward Buddhism. Chikazumi in this younger period engaged in political activity, especially via journalism in the ***Seikyō Jihō*** periodical initiated in 1899, and joined the Buddhist campaign against the First Religions Bill in the Diet (regarded by Buddhist institutions as treating Christianity too favorably). In this part of his life, he seems to have manifested a combination of deep inward Buddhist orientation and vigorous social activity. In 1900-1902, he spent two years in Europe per the direction of the Higashi Honganji, where he began to absorb the traditions and practices of European religious studies and Buddhology, which were then somewhat still new to Japan. Afterward, as a teacher in Tokyo, he began to engage with "Western modernity" when lecturing at the Kyūdō Kaikan institution. Subsequently, over the following couple of decades, Chikazumi was chiefly in-

volved with the doctrinally oriented publication *Kyūdō*, which was aimed at generating a version of Shin Buddhist discourse for the twentieth century. Offering what was at the time a strikingly fresh personal confessional voice, especially in his rendition of the "absolute compassion of misery," Chikazumi's writing and teaching had much influence over a number of intellectual leaders, especially educators, who were his contemporaries.

In the final phase of his career, Chikazumi participated (as he had not done so much before) in efforts directed to the interests of the Higashi Honganji institution and its membership per se, now via effort on the newspaper *Shinkai Kengen*. This led him to become entangled in organizational matters like scandals around the Higashi Honganji hereditary leadership. He also struggled with the relationship between the family-religion interests of the regular temple membership (attuned to the relatively generic East Asian conception of the Pure Land as a karmic transition zone) and the more philosophically upscale, personally interiorized version of Shinranian thought championed by the progressive intellectuals. Unfortunately, in 1931, Chikazumi suffered an attack of partial physical paralysis, which interfered with, but did not stop, his activities up to his death in 1941.

Connections between Chikazumi and younger intellectuals of his era are dealt with in the second part of Iwata's volume. One of these aspects was his influence on Japanese psychiatry, especially through the psychiatrist Furusawa Heisaku (1897-1968) who invented the term "Ajātaśatru complex" (*ajase kompurekkusu*). Furusawa possessed both a deep Shin Buddhist orientation and training in the Western traditions which were new to Japan. Another of these influences was Chikazumi's effects on certain writers, especially Kamura Isota (1897-1933) and Miyazawa Kenji (1896-1933), the latter of whom had a Shin Buddhist upbringing but experienced a familial conflict that led him to switch to his better-known Lotus Sutra devotionalism. Finally, a third dimension of Chikazumi's influence was his role in the "religious philosophy" of Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945), who is also known as a Marxist thinker.

Generalizing at the beginning of the second half of his book, Iwata argues that although each of these figures developed in his own creative field in his own way, they shared a common emphasis on the Shin doctrinal notion of "absolute compassion" (*zettai no jihi*). Iwata suggests that even observers within Japan have missed this connection due to their various preconceptions or prejudices about the material. Broadly, he criticizes the tendency of Japanese researchers to read texts narrowly without taking account of the larger contexts of their production.

Ōmi Toshihiro's rather contrasting book, which originated recently (2012) as a doctoral dissertation for Keio University, treats Chikazumi in a vein both more academic and more innovative. The opening preface self-consciously addresses the question of historiography of modern Japanese Buddhism, especially concerning Shin Buddhism's position in contemporary research, how paradigms and perspectives have shaped the subject, and the research situation regarding Chikazumi.[1]

With this awareness in mind, Ōmi's first chapter examines how "modern Shinshū" is itself a concept that was invented in the twentieth century. Kiyozawa Manshi's thought—which the author handles in the style of contemporary criticism as a mode of discourse (*gensetsu*)—created the major lineage of this modernity. Despite the disruptive or revolutionary reputation of this discourse initially, over time in the twentieth century, at least in the Higashi Honganji branch, it has moved from being unapproved doctrine (*itan*) to established tradition (*dentō*). Chikazumi was an important player in this "modern Shinshū" process of adaptation and transition.

However, as Ōmi explains in the second chapter, the process was not just a matter of discourse —in the sense of producing some mere revised language at the surface level—but of a deepening or

restoration of the sensibility of the tradition away from an orientation to "philosophy" (***tetsugaku***), in other words, something merely conceptual and therefore misleading, toward "experience" (***taiken***), the genuine personal reality. Ōmi further elucidates that Chikazumi pursued a mode of communication about this new, grounded experience which can be summarized as the very "vanishing of linguistic space" (***gengo kūkan no shoshitsu***) (pp. 79-80). Chikazumi, through his youthful anguish, introspection, confessionalism, and sense of received compassion, went through such a process himself, thus providing modern Shin Buddhism with a turning point that could serve as a model for others.

Chikazumi's existential transitions occurred in a larger context that was unprecedented in Japanese history. Chikazumi explicitly or implicitly was in intense dialogue with the forms of Western discourse that had entered Japan since the Meiji period and created neologisms, such as ***tetsugaku*** and ***taiken***. Additionally the cultural (and political) field now included Christianity, and True Pure Land Buddhism in particular was forced to interact with this new religious player because of Shin's institutional prominence and its non-monastic, congregational structure. On this stage, Chikazumi operated as a proselytizer who was concerned with strategy and tactics for spreading religious ideas; and over time his relation to Christianity shifted from confrontation to appropriation. He eventually reached a position described by Ōmi as "cutting off practice, but retaining the imaginational orientation (***shinkō***, 'faith')" (p.97). Yet as Ōmi himself voices, this stance only reemphasizes the question of just what this "modern era of Shinshū" is. What was experientially new and what was essentially just a recasting for a new era?

The apparent intensification of inward experience and the impacts of modern Christianity were interwoven with what Ōmi calls a "Buddhism of Personalities" (***jinkaku no bukkyō***). Modernity strengthened the distinction and differentiation of individuals, which was—even if only strictly speaking a phenomenon in the realm of (mere) "conventional reality"—a cultural and even political shift which had greatly affected the sensibility of Japanese Buddhist life by the Taishō period. The shifts were related to gender questions. Ōmi addresses the problem of reading the interior lives of female members of Shin communities (***monto***), the changing role of women in "modern Buddhism," and the playing out of matters of real experience and hopeful imaginative orientation in everyday life.

Even further the shifts were entangled with modifications in the nature of the relationships between the headquarters institutions (***honzan***) and their hereditary heads (or figureheads) and the centralizing modern Japanese political regime. Efforts to rethink and reform the institutions had begun early, including with the role of the sect leadership (***shūmon***) in the early Shōwa period. Yet the tradition remained complexly multi-stranded, displaying a good deal of collusion between the institutions and the new state, persistent devotionalism among ordinary members toward the ***hossu*** (hereditary head and descendant of Shinran), and serious tensions between commitment to Shin Buddhism and commitment to the state. In any case, after the Japanese defeat in the Fifteen-Year War, the nature of "Shin Buddhist modernity" had been transformed. As Ōmi summarizes in his closing chapter—which focuses on a number of intellectuals who were also regarded as ***myōkōnin*** (persons really gifted with experiential knowledge)—the Shin Buddhist tradition since the Meiji period has been a rich, complex intermingling of tradition and modernity.

What do these books suggest more broadly? Whether out of disinterest or misunderstanding, in their perception of Japanese Buddhism since 1900, non-Japanese, along with most "secular" Japanese as well, have tended to underestimate the continuity within the established, normalized, or routinized world of institutional Buddhist activity.

This disappearance of relatively "ordinary" organized Buddhism from contemporary awareness contrasts with the sporadic attention given to more apparently disruptive, "celebrity" figures, such as Kiyozawa Manshi. More broadly, the phenomenon is tied to a questionable modern historiographical perspective that discounts the contribution of the inherited "everyday" Buddhist presence in Japanese society in the twentieth century—especially in the early half when there was great deal of creative ferment. So, from the perspective of the early twenty-first century—a full hundred years after Chikazumi and his cohorts were active—one can be impressed by the passionate effort that was given at that time to "re-tune" a sophisticated Buddhist language for the post-Meiji world. The results are still contemporary, and have become embedded in much of common Japanese twentieth-century Buddhist discourse.

At the same time it is worth reinforcing Ōmi's observation: what is this "Shin Buddhist modernity" all about, really? A reassessment might be that it is not actually helpful either directly or implicitly to associate it with "universal" notions of religious "modernity" or "modernization" derived from the Western experience of Christianity. Perhaps the Shin case involves a fundamentally non-Western "modernization" story with many nexuses and points distinctive to itself. From that perspective, while research into this complicated, kaleidoscopic Japanese Pure Land story is of substantial academic value in the history of that special Asian country, and is perhaps of some existential interest to a facet of Japanese Buddhists, up to this point it is hard to see that the convoluted record can be made of concern to anyone who is non-Japanese and not involved with Shin Buddhism on the inside.

Note

[1]. A rapidly increasing understanding of these problems by non-Japanese scholars is marked by the outstanding articles in a recent special issue of the journal ***Japanese Religions***, edited by Orion Klautau. See "The Politics of Buddhist Studies in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," special issue, ***Japanese Religions*** vol. 39, nos. 1 & 2 (2014).

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