and positive quality of the Mahayana Buddhist doctrine of sunyata, which admittedly sounds negative to the Western ear. He considers the main strengths of Buddhist philosophy concerning the beginningless and endless aspects of time and the quality of naturalness or suchness: Buddhist awakening is consistently realized in "the process of living-dying *at this moment* . . ." (p. 59). Yet Abe concedes that because Buddhist thought has been primarily concerned with the "trans-human" dimension beyond time in the conventional sense, it appears weaker in terms of concrete ethical issues in history. Another topic considered in Abe's essay is a Buddhist response to the Holocaust. Although the responsibility for this terrible case of evil and suffering is at least in part Christian, with Judaism as the victim having to reconcile the event with its own understanding of God, it is possible that Buddhist notions of karma, transmigration, and dependent origination can shed light on the causes and possible sense of resolution of the Holocaust.

Abe's contributions cover nearly half the book, and his essay reveals him in top form, with his usual penetrating insight and profound understanding of the Buddhist tradition coupled with a precision and sharpness often associated with Western rationality. The respondents also give excellent presentations. They are careful to acknowledge the merit of Abe's critique when it hits home, and are also able to take him to task when they feel he either misunderstands or misrepresents Christianity, or presents Buddhism in a way that is not altogether persuasive. The Christian respondents discuss many of the same concerns about Buddhist thought in relation to ethical and historical matters that Abe has already raised. In addition, the Jewish respondent points out a possible trace of bias in Abe's presentation of Nietzsche's view of history which seems to associate the Old Testament with a "pre-moral" stage of civilization, and the feminist argues that the dialogue has been largely insensitive to women's concerns, although the Buddhist commitment to end suffering could invite "women [to] become forces for transformation rather than scapegoats for the intolerable" (p. 112).

Abe's well-reasoned rejoinder is particularly notable for the way, in light of the issues discussed by his Western counterparts, he explains the ability of Buddhism to be truly dynamic in the concrete, historical realm. Although he does not use the term explicitly, Abe is basically offering a timely update of the traditional Buddhist distinction between "two truths": absolute and relative. Here, Abe also integrates, again unstated, some of his thinking with regard to his recent analysis of the philosophy of time in Dōgen's doctrines of being-time, impermanence-Buddha-nature, and the oneness of practice and attainment (see Abe's *A Study of Dōgen: His Philosophy and Religion*, SUNY Press, 1992). According to Abe, historical and ethical issues are located at the intersection of the "horizontal" or relative view of time, which in Buddhism is linear, unidirectional, and irreversible, and the "vertical" or absolute view of time, which is translinear, multidirectional, and reversible. The advantage of the Buddhist approach — the reason that Nishitani refers to Zen as the transcendental or self-surpassing (*kōjō*) philosophy that serves as the paradigm of all religions and philosophies unbound to any sense of revelation or externalized authority of truth — is that it demonstrates how the reversibility and irreversibility of time are realized in the fullness of the present moment. Therefore, without imposing itself or insisting on correcting Christianity, Buddhism offers the possibility for liberation from all factors of human suffering based on the realization of the eternal now.

As eloquent and convincing a spokesperson as Abe is for Buddhism in the contemporary world, helping to complete Nishitani's philosophical encounter with nihilism and science, there still seem to be several areas for discussion that could enhance his dialogue with the West. First, as Abe shows, the strength of Buddhism primarily lies in the metaphysics of sunyata, but the transition to ethical issues, particularly on the magnitude of the Holocaust, needs further clarification. On the one hand, it should be pointed out that Buddhist approaches to morality since the inception of the religion are thorough and insightful in terms of individual spiritual training as well as community and social affairs. Yet, as a monastic religion, Buddhism probably has not had the opportunity to articulate and clarify the application of these principles, and this probably needs to be done in a more specific and legalistic way than the abstract, philosophical discussion offered in the book. In addition, the dialogue is conducted entirely on the level of "great tradition," with little mention of how religions, now faced with anti-religious ideologies, will be able to appeal on the level of "little tradition"; that is, how they will be able to appeal to the rituals and symbols that sustain the belief and practice of the less intellectual believers who are increasingly secularized and indifferent to religiosity. Nietzsche said that "God is dead" because we have killed him, and Heidegger laid the blame for this at the hands of philosophers who create an image of an abstract deity that is incapable of commanding a worshipful, reverent attitude. It appears that if religion is to survive and prosper in the face of its rivals and challengers, it must develop a two-truths approach of liberating "common folk" from their preoccupation with secularistic or superstitious attitudes while at the same time addressing and rectifying their genuinely spiritual needs.

Steven Heine
Assistant Professor
Religious Studies Program
Pennsylvania State University

Impermanence is Buddha-nature: Dōgen's Understanding of Temporality. *By Joan Stambaugh.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990. x + 146 pp. Cloth. US$18.95.

Few premodern Japanese thinkers have received as much attention from Western philosophical circles as the thirteenth century Sōtō Zen master Dōgen. This interest has been sparked and facilitated by insightful English translations of key portions of Dōgen's masterful collected work, the *Shōbōgenzō* (especially those by Norman Waddell and Masao Abe), and by several book-length studies of Dōgen's thought — most notably those by Hee-jin Kim, Steven Heine, and Carl Bielefeldt. Kim and Heine, in particular, have examined Dōgen from a cross-cultural philosophic perspective.

Professor Stambaugh, whose back-

ground is primarily German Philosophy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, first turned to Dōgen in the climactic chapter of her book *The Real is Not the Rational* [Albany, NY, 1986]. Also the author of *The Problem of Time in Nietzsche* [Lewisburg, 1987], she has combined in her present book many of the concerns and issues raised in these previous works while embarking on several new avenues of investigation. She is genuinely impressed with Dōgen, and portrays him as a strong and critical voice capable of insights that frequently go beyond the formulations proffered by the Western philosophers with whom she compares him, philosophers such as Aristotle, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger.

Generally her method of argument in each chapter consists of setting out basic categories — such as transcendence-immanence, identity-difference, etc. — or sketching the view of a particular philosopher — such as Hegel's notion of dialectic — and then allowing Dōgen to either supplement or supplant what has been introduced. In the earlier chapter this method proves fruitful and she repeatedly zeroes in on crucial passages from Dōgen's seminal works: *Uji* ("Being-Time"), *Genjōkōan* ("Actualizing the Kōan"), *Busshō* ("Buddha-nature"), *Gyōji* ("Ceaseless Practice"), and so on. She is a careful reader, sensitive to many of the philosophical subtleties of Dōgen's writings, and her insights are frequently illuminating and lucid. This is no mean task, given the difficult and unusual language Dōgen uses to express himself.

She is particularly effective, I think, in her discussion of the Buddha-nature fascicle, clearly explaining why, for Dōgen, Buddha-nature is neither something that someone possesses nor a potentiality that someone develops or brings to fruition. Dōgen's denials fly in the face of what virtually all East Asian Buddhists had said (and many continue to say) about Buddha-nature; namely, "X has (or possesses) Buddha-nature," or "One develops (insight of or into) one's Buddha-nature." Instead, Dōgen states that Buddha-nature is not permanent or other than impermanent things, and yet, in the context of Buddha-nature, impermanent things are not impermanent things. Buddha-nature is the world becoming the world each moment, or, as Buddhists have put it more traditionally, "coming-to-be-just-as-it-is" (*yatha-bhūtam*). This is because each thing encompasses more than itself, while at the same time being nothing but itself (i.e., what it is in an encompassment). Each and every distinct situation instantiates a totality (or, perhaps better, an "encompassivity") that neither subsumes it nor is subsumed by it. Things neither move through time, nor does time move things. Everything is right here now, and "[t]he fact that past and future are in the present moment means that there is nowhere for the present moment to go. The passage of the present moment takes place within the present moment; it does not make a transition into the future, for the future is not 'ahead' of it" (p. 49). Buddha-nature is the instantiation of specific totalities in the inescapable, unmoving present, a present which nonetheless never abides for more than a moment — and thus, itself, is impermanent.

Dōgen's formulations are as challenging to modern readers as they were for his contemporaries, a veritable assault on our most basic common-sense and philosophical assumptions. And that is how Dōgen intended them. T'ien-t'ai* (Tendai) and Hua-yen (Kegon) Buddhists had talked about "totality" for centuries, usually in dialectical terms asserting some sort of identity between particular events and the totality of events. Dōgen insists that totality is not a dialectical interfusion — that would only be an abstract conceptualization — but rather an immediate experience of the full presencing of a totality through any distinct, particular occasion, i.e., encompassivity through singularity. Thus Dōgen repeatedly dislodges such commonplace Buddhist 'identity' axioms as "Form is emptiness" or Kegon's "mutual interpenetration of all events" (*jiji muge*) by posing a barrier to such facile identifications. Rather than expound the inseparability of life and death, he says that, seen properly, "life is fully life, death is fully death," and they shouldn't be conflated in the name of "totality" or anything else (cf. his *Shinjingakudō*). Dōgen is jarring his fellow Buddhists out of their dialectical complacency and smugness, since this sort of conflation is only a verbal, conceptual exercise, not the actual realization of "the three-thousand chilicosms in and as one single thought-instant" (as Tendai would say). Likewise, past and future can be *conceptually* related, i.e., one can generate concepts to link a conceptualized present with concepts of the past or future, but, *as lived*, the present relates only to the present and the future only to the future. In other words, even when we think about the future, we are only thinking in a present moment; the future itself is always elsewhere. Dōgen, in true Buddhist fashion, seeks to help us overcome the skewer of conceptual conflation. Practice, for Dōgen, is the persistent enactment of this overcoming with its concomitant encompassing vision.

The later chapters are unfortunately weakened by two handicaps. First, since Stambaugh cannot read Dōgen in the original classical Japanese, she is at the mercy of translators and interpreters, an unhappy place to be when dealing with a writer such as Dōgen whose message is as much in the creative and innovative *way* that he used language as in *what* he said. Her obvious sensitivity to linguistic, terminological nuances — admirably displayed in her treatment of Heidegger and Hegel — regrettably is not brought to bear on Dōgen's text.

Secondly, she is not a Buddhologist, and thus, despite admirable efforts, she fails to appreciate Dōgen's creative appropriation and radical critique of Buddhist formulae and terminology. For instance, rather than properly contextualizing Dōgen's project within Tendai and earlier developments in Ch'an, she offers marginally helpful and potentially misleading synopses of Nagarjuna and Kegon. Dōgen is much closer to Tendai — after all, he grew up in a Tendai monastery — and much of what he critiques as problematic (e.g., inadequate notions of Buddha-nature) can be traced back to Kegon formulations (e.g., their notion of *tathagatagarbha*). More importantly, many of the keys to Dōgen's otherwise baffling statements lie precisely in Tendai thought, especially in the way it formulates the relation between particularity and encompassivity.

These handicaps converge in Stambaugh's later chapters and become enmeshed in one particular statement which, judging from the frequency and intensity with which Stambaugh repeatedly returns to it, serves as her major "insight" into Dōgen. She cites Kim's translation of a passage late in the *Uji* that ends: "'Mind obstructs 'mind' and sees 'mind.' 'Words' obstruct 'words' and see 'words.' 'Obstruction hinders obstruction and sees obstruction; obstruction obstructs obstruction': this is time." For some reason which is never

* Romanized spelling of Chinese names and terms in this review follows the Wade-Giles system.—E.

adequately explained, she thinks the phrase "obstruction obstructs obstruction" is the key to all of Dōgen, or, as she puts it, "self-obstruction is Absolute Freedom." Whatever that might mean, she has apparently been miscued by Kim, who, in his discussion of this passage says very much the same thing (he doesn't explain what he means by it either). Stambaugh, familiar on the one hand with tautological definitions of thinking going from Aristotle to Heidegger, and on the other with Hegel and the German Idealists, and the vital role the notion of Absolute Freedom played for them, transfers this importance onto Dōgen. Confused about the contextual significance of such terms as "unstained" (*muro*) and "undefile" (*fuzen*), and led by sloppy translators to draw dubious distinctions between various epistemic terms (chapter 7), her argument falters and grows obscure. Perhaps she has distracted herself by using Dōgen to set the ground for Heidegger (the only philosopher she intimates may have a deeper vision than Dōgen and with whom the book ends). It might have been instructive had she allowed Dōgen to critique Heidegger's central idea, the "ontological difference."

What does Dōgen's phrase about obstruction obstructing obstruction mean? Obstruction (*keige*; a compound found in the Heart Sutra and elsewhere) is usually taken by Buddhists to be the basic human cognitive problem. Dōgen is saying that the moment by moment actualization that he is calling 'being-time' now actualizes obstructedly, and then now actualizes some other way. Obstruction, non-obstruction, both are being-time. Dōgen denies that there is anything *in potentia* that lies behind or in these moments; there is absolutely nothing to reify (and so it might be better to use the term "instantiate" rather than "actualize," since it is not the actualization of a potential). Each full and complete moment "passes" (*kyōryaku*) into another full and complete moment (". . . today flows into today, tomorrow flows into tomorrow").

But to Dōgen — for whom the other reading of the kanji *uji* ("being-time"), namely *aru toki* ("sometimes," or "at some times"), is not an errant notion but merely a shallow statement of the full import of *uji* — all things in all their changing particularities, *insofar as they instantiate in/as an instant*, whether as free or obstructed, all these are being-time. Sometimes one sees fully; sometimes one's vision is obstructed; both are being-time (though there is a tendency to not recognize the latter as such). Each moment has its parameters, its horizons, but it is complete unto itself. And each moment is necessarily momentary, hence impermanent. Buddha-nature is a name for the actualization of each moment. Therefore, as Dōgen and the title of this book state, "Impermanence is Buddha-nature."

Dan Lusthaus
Assistant Professor
East Asian Buddhism
University of Illinois-Champaign

Themes, Scenes, and Taste in the History of Japanese Garden Art. *By Wybe Kuitert.* Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1988. xiii + 348 pp. Hfl. 80.—

This book represents a new trend among young European and American students of the Japanese garden. Completing their academic dissertations by conducting in-depth research in Japan, the theses are then rewritten for commercial publication to a wider audience. The result has been the publication of a number of books of high quality.

The book under review here, by Dutch landscape architect Wybe Kuitert, looks at three particular aspects of the Japanese garden. Given the extensive history of landscape design in Japan, these detailed studies open windows to reveal the meaning of gardens at different points in time.

The author plays down the common thought that the Japanese garden represents man in harmony with nature whereas in Western gardens man conquered nature by imprinting his formalities and symmetries on the landscape. Kuitert prefers to explore ideas that are often common to both East and West.

The first part of the book is called "Themes," and deals with the late Heian period, from the tenth through the twelfth centuries. Often called the "Golden Age" of Japanese gardens, the Heian period produced a basis of native garden art that was to be influential in subsequent centuries. The prime examples of these gardens were those of the nobility and the Imperial court. Unfortunately, none of these gardens exist today in their original state. They were sumptuous gardens distinguished by their large boating ponds and a ritualistic courtlife that looked to nature as the basis of everyday life. There is, however, an abundance of literature (often written by women of the court, such as Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*), illustrative scrolls, and recent excavation of palace sites that gives us a clear insight into what these gardens were like. Kuitert tells us how nature was perceived, and about the literary content that was to be found in the garden imagery of that era. The Heian period also produced the first garden manual, the *Sakuteiki*. It was written by a Heian nobleman and became a codified presentation of thematic images for creating landscapes in grand courtly gardens.

The second part of the book is called "Scenes," and moves to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which are termed the Medieval period. The focus shifts to Zen Buddhist gardens. Here, the author explores the development of Zen gardens and the evolution of the small temple gardens of rocks and gravel that are referred to as *karesansui* (dry landscape) gardens.

Kuitert postulates that the Chinese landscape art of the Song period (960-1279) that was imported into Japan was a primary influence in the layout and imagery of these austere gardens of alluring rock arrangements set in a field of white gravel or verdant moss. A recent and popular interpretation of Zen gardens is that they express the "spirit of Zen." The author claims, however, that research shows no historical evidence to support this view. According to Kuitert, the "spirit" explanation was created in the intellectual climate of the 1930s, along with an emerging nationalism. It is his view that these gardens made full use of the Chinese theory of composing landscape scenes. There is considerable evidence that Zen gardens were inspired by landscape painting. Although the imagery in these gardens seems ambiguous, the book points out that historical evidence exists which elucidates their original meaning.

The third part of the book is called "Taste," and covers the first half of the seventeenth century. In the early 1600s there was a great surge of creativity in all the arts due in part to the shift from a military to a peacetime economy. Japan had ended centuries of warfare and, with a centralized government,