aspect of Dharma Assemblies, in both English and Japanese scholarship. Chapters include an analysis, with textual references, of the Yuima-e as depicted in the Kasuga 春日 scrolls. Ishii Kōsei discusses the influence of debates on performing arts, a most welcome topic, while a contribution by Gaetan Rappo brings us into the Edo 江戸 period (1603–1868) with a discussion of the *gozen rongi* 御前論議, "debates in front of the shogun," including this genre's relationship with, and differences from, earlier forms of debates—undoubtedly a topic little known in English scholarship. For this reason, perhaps a translation of this study would have been nice alongside Paul Groner's English chapter at the end of the volume. What ties together the several chapters in the third part of the book is that they all in some way discuss the relation between ritualized debates and art, literature, performing arts, and, ultimately, the society in which they took place. The book concludes with Groner's chapter, which is on Vinaya revival in thirteenth-century Japan. This is an interesting and clear chapter, but it does not relate well with the rest of the volume, as no explicit connection with debates or debate culture is made.

Murakami Senshō to Nihon kindai bukkyō 村上専精と日本近代仏教 (Murakami Senshō and Modern Japanese Buddhism). Edited by Orion Klautau / オリオン・クラウタウ. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2021. xviii + 349 pages. Hardcover. ISBN-13: 978-4-8318-5561-9.

Robert F. Rhodes

Murakami Senshō 村上専精 (1851–1929) was a prominent Japanese scholar of Buddhism during the Meiji 明治 and Taishō 大正 periods (1868–1912; 1912–1926), most famous for having advanced the controversial thesis that "Mahayana Buddhism was not taught by the Buddha," the so-called *Daijō hibussetsu ron* 大乗非仏説論. Born into an impoverished temple family belonging to the Ōtani 大谷 branch of Shin 真 Buddhism in Tanba 丹波 Province (now Hyōgo Prefecture), he became a lecturer at Tokyo University in 1890 and was appointed to the chair of Indian philosophy at the same university when the post was first established in 1917. In the meantime, Murakami helped to make the study of Buddhist history an academic discipline by founding the journal *Bukkyō shirin* 仏教史林 (Forest of Buddhist History) in 1894 with Washio Junkei 鷲尾順敬 (1868–1941) and Sakaino Kōyō 境野黄洋 (1871–1933). He was also noted as an educator, helping found Tōyō Jogakkō 東洋女学校, a women's high school, in 1905. But his fame (or notoriety) was solidified in 1901, when he published the first volume of his *Bukkyō tōitsuron* 仏教統一論 (The Unity of Buddhism), entitled the *Taikōron* 大綱論 (Overview), in which he proposed that Mahayana Buddhism was not

taught by the Buddha. (Murakami subsequently wrote four additional volumes for the *Bukkyō tōitsuron*, making it five volumes in all.) The notion that Mahayana Buddhism was not taught by the Buddha was actually not a new idea; as Michel Mohr (p. 4) and Minowa Kenryō (pp. 109–10) both note in their chapters, Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎 正治 (1873–1949), the first professor of religious studies at Tokyo University, had already argued in his *Bukkyō seiten shiron* 仏教聖典史論 (History of Buddhist Scriptures, 1899) that the Mahayana teachings postdated the historical Buddha. In spite of this fact, Murakami's thesis created a major controversy that resulted in him being expelled from the Ōtani denomination. However, he was reinstated in 1911 and served as president of Otani University from 1926 to 1928.

Murakami's *Daijō hibussetsu ron* was an epoch-making idea that greatly advanced the critical study of Buddhism in Japan and is frequently highlighted in studies on modern Japanese Buddhism. But in spite of Murakami's importance, there has been no sustained study on this seminal figure in Japanese. (In English, there was a double issue of *The Eastern Buddhist*, n.s., vol. 37, nos. 1/2, 2005, devoted to him.) Hence this collection of studies on Murakami is a major contribution to the growing body of literature on modern Japanese Buddhism.

This volume consists of ten uniformly excellent chapters that contextualize Murakami in his social, political, and cultural milieus and shed new light on aspects of his thought that have not been sufficiently addressed previously. The book begins with an introductory chapter by Michel Mohr considering whether the influence of the universalistic thought of Unitarianism, which had a profound impact on the development of modern Japanese Buddhism, can be discerned in Murakami's notion of the "unity" of Buddhism. To explore this issue, Mohr reviews various aspects of Murakami's life and concludes that although there is no direct evidence of Unitarian influence, the fact that Murakami had contacts with Unitarian intellectuals and wrote several articles for the widely circulated Unitarian journal *Rokugō zasshi* 六合雑誌 suggests that he was acquainted with this branch of Christianity. Mohr ends his chapter by making the provocative suggestion that the Unitarian ideal of "free inquiry" intersects with Murakami's attempt to provide a unified vision of Buddhism transcending sectarian differences that would provide a platform from which to reform Japanese Buddhism.

The next two chapters delve into themes that were prominent in Murakami's thought before he composed the *Bukkyō tōitsuron*. Miura Shū's methodologically sophisticated and complex study focuses on Murakami's anti-Christian polemics to situate it in the intellectual currents of Meiji and Taishō Japan. Underlying Miura's chapter is his argument that the Christianity that was being targeted for attack by the Buddhists was not Christianity as it actually existed but an imagined entity that was considered to threaten the established order. In other words, anti-Christian polemics were not really concerned with understanding Christianity; their real aim was to defend Buddhism. To

protect their faith, the Buddhist denominations founded new educational institutions in the early Meiji period for studying non-Buddhist topics, especially Christianity, alongside the academies devoted to the study of Buddhist doctrines that had already been built in the Edo 江戸 period (1603–1868). In this way, Buddhist studies was divided into two fields, in which the study of non-Buddhist teachings (*gegaku* 外学) was employed to defend the Buddhist teachings (*naigaku* 内学). Miura suggests that for Murakami, anti-Christian polemics (*gegaku*) served as a kind of "practical study" (*jitsugaku* 実学) that would be applied to defending the Buddhist teachings (*naigaku*).

As narrated by Miura, Murakami was originally opposed to Christianity and organized a series of lectures to counter the Western religion. But, Miura astutely notes, Murakami saw his anti-Christian campaign not only as a means to combat Christianity but also as a method for gaining fame and prestige for himself. However, after he moved to Tokyo in 1887, Murakami realized that the traditional ways of studying Buddhism were no longer appropriate for modern Japan and turned to the study of Western philosophy. Learning that many people in the West had by then begun to condemn Christianity as being unscientific since it rejected Darwin's theory of evolution, Murakami adopted the same rhetoric in his writings to good effect. However, as Miura points out, Murakami's attempt to apply non-Buddhist teachings to defend the Buddhist teachings had unforeseen results, since it led him to study Buddhist history, which in turn prompted him to espouse his *Daijō hibussetsu ron* and ultimately to be expelled from the Ōtani denomination as a threat to the established Buddhist order. In Miura's view, Murakami was ironically expelled from his denomination for the same reason that he opposed Christianity: for being perceived as a threat to the established order.

The following chapter, by Moro Shigeki, investigates Murakami's understanding of Buddhist logic (*inmyō* 因明), focusing on the *Katsuyō kōjutsu inmyōgaku zensho* 活用講述因明学全書 (A Comprehensive Study concerning the Practical Application of Buddhist Logic; hereafter, *Comprehensive Study*), which Murakami published early in his career in 1893. Although Murakami's interest in Buddhist logic has rarely attracted attention before, he is known to have written at least four works on this topic (p. 60). Murakami studied Buddhist logic under Kira Kōyō 雲英晃耀 (1831–1910), who, in view of the fact that the Imperial Diet was established in 1889, stressed that the study of logic can be useful for political and legal debates. Murakami held similar views but, in Moro's opinion, also saw it as a tool for discerning the truth and argued that it was essential for the doctrinal study of Buddhism.

The next three chapters concern Murakami's *Daijō hibussetsu ron*. Okada Masahiko's chapter discusses both Murakami's methodology underlying the *Taikōron* and the criticism leveled against this work by scholars of comparative religion. At the beginning of the *Taikōron*, Murakami laments that Japanese Buddhism is divided into numerous competing schools and affirms his intention to provide a unified account of Buddhism

based on the comparative study of the teachings of the various schools. The methodology for conducting such research is based on what he calls the "five kinds of eyes for conducting research" (*goshu no kenkyūgan* 五種の研究眼), or the five perspectives from which to study Buddhism: doctrinal, logical, historical, comparative, and critical. Through such methodology, Murakami asserted, it is possible to discern the unity, or the common essence, behind the multifarious teachings of Buddhism. According to Okada, the most important of these five for Murakami were the historical and comparative approaches. The former is necessary to understand how Buddhism developed from the historical Buddha, while the latter is needed to extract the essence of Buddhism from among its various permutations.

After clarifying Murakami's approach in the *Taikōron*, in the second part of his essay Okada discusses the reaction to Murakami's thesis by scholars belonging to the then-nascent field of comparative religion. Although Murakami was criticized within the Ōtani denomination primarily for claiming that the Buddha did not preach Mahayana sutras, Okada makes the important point that this notion was not problematic for comparative religionists of the time; it was, in fact, "common sense" (*jōshiki* 常識) for them (p. 99). Rather, they criticized Murakami on methodological grounds. For example, Yoshida Kenryū 吉田賢龍 (1870–1943) questioned Murakami's facile division of Indian religion into theistic and non-theistic strands of thought. Similarly, Katō Genchi 加藤玄智 (1873–1965), a major figure in the study of religions in Japan, praised Murakami for adopting a historical/comparative approach, yet criticized him for not going far enough inasmuch as he still gave a privileged position to Buddhism. Okada's chapter is significant since it reveals that Murakami's thesis was not simply attacked for undermining the authority of Mahayana sutras.

The fourth chapter, by Minowa Kenryō, begins by pointing out that Murakami's *Daijō hibussetsu ron* has often been misunderstood in the past as having asserted that Mahayana Buddhism is not Buddhism. However, Minowa argues, this is not the case. Murakami's actual position is that although from a historical perspective the Mahayana cannot be said to have been taught by the historical Buddha, from the doctrinal point of view it is definitely Buddhism. Indeed, Minowa suggests that Murakami was actually intent on showing that the Mahayana is a legitimate form of Buddhism. For Murakami, the Mahayana is a "developed form of Buddhism" (*kaihatsu sareta bukkyō* 開発された仏教) that was deduced from the great awakening experienced by Śākyamuni.[1] In Minowa's view, the *Daijō hibussetsu ron* reflects Murakami's attempt to create a grand synthesis of Buddhism from a higher position encompassing both the teachings of early Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism.

[1] Here, the term "deduced" is employed in the sense that it is used in logic: to "follow logically from, or . . . [be a] logical consequence of, certain premises" (Paul Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 5. New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1967, p. 13).

Ryan Ward's chapter, which rounds out the section on Murakami's *Daijō hibus-setsu ron*, is the Japanese translation of a paper originally published in English as "Against Buddhist Unity: Murakami Senshō and his Sectarian Critics" in the feature on Murakami in *The Eastern Buddhist* mentioned above. In this chapter, Ward recounts in meticulous detail the criticism directed toward Murakami's *Bukkyō tōitsuron* and additionally suggests that Murakami was expelled from the Ōtani denomination not only for his radical ideas but also for supporting the movement to reform the denomination led by the Shirakawa Party (Shirakawatō 白河党) under the leadership of Kiyozawa Manshi 清沢満之 (1863–1903). But, Ward continues, although Murakami was once forced to leave the priesthood for his views, he vehemently criticized the attempt by Kaneko Daiei 金子大栄 (1881–1976), a professor at Otani University and an Ōtani branch priest, to demythologize the notion of the Pure Land—an attempt that resulted in Kaneko being expelled from the priesthood. This, as Ward maintains, clearly shows that it is far too simplistic to understand Meiji and post-Meiji Buddhist history as a struggle between sectarian conservatives and proponents of modernism.

The sixth chapter, by Orion Klautau, focuses on the notion of self-cultivation (*shūyō* 修養) that comes to hold a prominent place in Murakami's thought toward the end of his life. As Klautau puts it, Murakami's main interest in his early career was centered on philosophy and ethics, but it gradually turned to history and comparative studies in his attempt to discover the unity of Buddhism. But even after this shift, Murakami remained concerned with ethics, believing that Buddhism should serve as the basis of Japanese morality. Hence, from around the time of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, he became involved with Buddhist education by founding the Tōyō Jogakkō in 1905, while simultaneously developing an ethical discourse centered on the notion of self-cultivation. As Klautau notes, Murakami maintained that the education of women should be founded on an "Oriental ethics" (*Tōyō no rinri* 東洋の倫理) with Confucianism and Buddhism at its core, and its aim should be to foster a "practical morality" (*jissenteki dōtoku* 実践的道徳) as enunciated in the Imperial Rescript on Education. Such views have led earlier scholars to criticize Murakami for abetting a gender-based division of labor deriving from imperial Japan's nationalistic ideology. Klautau concurs with this view and further develops this idea by pointing out that Murakami's mature views on morality as set forth in *Tsūzoku shūyōron* 通俗修養論 (Popular Theory of Self-Cultivation) also develop a similar discourse, emphasizing how the perils of Western materialism can be overcome through self-cultivation based on the teachings of Confucianism and Buddhism. In the final pages of his chapter, Klautau argues that by underscoring the importance of self-cultivation, Murakami made a significant contribution to modern Shin Buddhism. Modern Shin thinkers like Kiyozawa Manshi and Soga Ryōjin 曽我量深 (1875–1971) were also compelled to grapple with this issue, but Murakami

took a different approach from these two figures: he attempted to connect self-cultivation to religion by contrasting the "external type of self-cultivation" (*gaikeiteki shūyōhō* 外形的修養法) characteristic of education and morality with the "introspective type of self-cultivation" (*naikanteki shūyōhō* 内観的修養法) found in religion and then positing the latter as the most important form of self-cultivation. For Murakami, Klautau concludes, "the final goal of both 'Buddhism' and 'self-cultivation' was to return to an ideal world transcending the secular realm" (p. 196).

The seventh chapter, by Watanabe Ken'ya, is a delightful account of how Murakami and his disciple Tokiwa Daijō 常盤大定 (1870–1945), a renowned scholar of Chinese Buddhism, contrived to establish the chair of Indian philosophy at Tokyo University. Based on Tokiwa's account (which, interestingly enough, is virtually the only extended account of this event that we have), Watanabe guides the reader through the fascinating details of how the duo managed to acquire the funds to establish the chair, how leaks and counterleaks to the media were used to influence who would be appointed to the chair (Murakami eventually got the post), and how Murakami insisted until the very end that the chair should be endowed in "Buddhist studies" and not "Indian philosophy" as the faculty senate decreed (though ultimately, it was the latter name that was given to the chair).

The next chapter, by Ikeda Tomofumi, examines the massive multivolume *Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryō* 明治維新神仏分離史料 (Materials Related to the Separation of the Kami from the Buddhas in the Meiji Restoration, hereafter *Shiryō*), which Murakami published between 1926 and 1929 in collaboration with Washio Junkei and Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助 (1877–1955). This was a massive collection of documents concerning the *haibutsu kishaku* 廃仏毀釈 (literally, "abolish the Buddha and destroy Śākyamuni") movement to expunge Buddhist elements from Shinto shrines carried out in the early years of the Meiji period. This movement, at times involving the violent destruction of Buddhist temples, statues, and ritual implements, shocked the Buddhist community and was one of the factors that galvanized Japanese Buddhists to call for the reform of their religion. In Ikeda's view, the goal of the *Shiryō* was not only to preserve the memory of this persecution but also to bring about a rejuvenation of Buddhism. Murakami and his collaborators, Ikeda further explains, viewed the phenomenon of *shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合 (the assimilation of Buddhism and Shinto) quite positively, seeing it as one of the characteristic features of Japanese Buddhism. Moreover, Ikeda continues, Murakami contended in the *Shiryō* that Buddhism and the state had been closely tied to each other throughout history and argued that Buddhism has a vital role to play in the moral life of modern Japan.

The volume concludes with Hayashi Makoto's chapter containing his trenchant comments on the chapters preceding it. Appended to the end of the volume are transcriptions of several documents and letters related to Murakami's activities and an

extremely detailed chronology of Murakami's life. It may also be added that the book is beautifully designed, featuring photographs of an elderly Murakami on its front cover and a young Murakami on the back.

As the chapters in this volume abundantly show, Murakami was a multifaceted scholar who played a major role in the development of modern Buddhist studies in Japan. Many of these chapters also reveal that his thought reflects the wider social and cultural currents of the Meiji and Taishō periods, suggesting that a more detailed study of this figure could provide new insights into the intellectual history of those years. Unfortunately, despite his importance Murakami gradually receded from public memory over the years, leading Hayashi to state that "although it may be an exaggeration to say that he is 'a forgotten Buddhologist' (*wasurerareta bukkyō gakusha* 忘れられた仏教学者), there is no mistake that he has become 'a Buddhologist that no one talks about any more' (*katararenakunatta bukkyō gakusha* 語られなくなった仏教学者)" (p. 257). This volume will undoubtedly serve to redress this situation and rescue Murakami from the oblivion to which he has been unjustly consigned for so long.

The Lost Way to the Good: Dionysian Platonism, Shin Buddhism, and the Shared Quest to Reconnect a Divided World. By Thomas Plant. Brooklyn: Angelico Press, 2021. xxiv + 244 pages. Hardcover. ISBN-13: 978-1-62138-791-6.

Domingos S. de Sousa

Thomas Plant is a Chaplain at Rikkyo University, Tokyo, and Fellow of The Cambridge Centre for the Study of Platonism. He wrote a comparative study of the thought of Dionysius the Areopagite (fl. ca. late 5th–early 6th c.) and Shinran Shōnin 親鸞聖人 (1173–1262) for his doctoral degree and has been engaged in interfaith dialogue with Shin Buddhist clergy and academics in the UK and Japan. He declares that it was his experience of the East that guided him from "atheist materialism to Christianity" and to the study of the ancient and mystical theologian, Dionysius the Areopagite (pp. 3–4). The study of Shinran, in particular, "is part of the strange path that led [him] inadvertently to the Christian faith" (p. 122). Both figures had a profound influence on his spiritual journey. Through the study of their thought, he discovers "the providential love that sunders the wall between faith and reason and satisfies both heart and mind" (p. 122). He claims that Buddhism and Christianity point equally to "a person of compassionate love beyond being, yet who sustains all beings" (p. 122).

Plant portrays himself as a "midlife advocate for the restoration of tradition in the West" (p. 3) and a proud Christian traditionalist. He is convinced that if Christians are