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*Jinsai* 伊藤仁斎, in *Nihon no meicho* 日本の名著, vol. 13 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 1973), pp. 36–443.

- 5 – A modern edition of Jinsai's *Gomō jigi* is in Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎 and Shimizu Shigeru 清水茂, eds., *Itō Jinsai/Itō Tōgai* 伊藤仁斎/伊藤東涯, *Nihon shisō taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 33 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1985), pp. 11–168. For a translation, see John A. Tucker, trans., *Itō Jinsai's Gomō jigi and the Philosophical Definition of Early-Modern Japan* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998).

*Buddhist Inclusivism: Attitudes Towards Religious Others.* By Kristin Beise Kiblinger. London and New York: Ashgate Publishing, 2005. Pp. 145. Hardcover.

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In this era of recrudescing religious strife, any book is welcome that contributes to interfaith dialogue. This is especially true if that book does so from the perspective of Buddhism, since it has historically paid little attention to this increasingly important topic. Kristin Beise Kiblinger's *Buddhist Inclusivism* is such a book, and it is an exemplary addition to the cross-cultural discussion on ecumenism. At first blush, it is somewhat puzzling that Buddhists have done little work in this area because, as Kiblinger points out, "there is a romanticized perception of Buddhism as an exceptionally tolerant and inclusivistic religion" (p. 3). Be this popular view as it may, it is true that Buddhist scholars and theologians have to date made few contributions in this regard, and Kiblinger's volume is an attempt to address this deficiency. It is notable that while Kiblinger is not herself a Buddhist, she believes that scholars from the "outside" can make a contribution to Buddhist interreligious dialogue because their distance from the tradition might very well produce insights or understandings that may not occur to, or could be overlooked by, those who are of the faith.

Kiblinger begins by explaining that there are three possible responses to the religious other: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. The exclusivist attitude of some religions toward other religions is dismissive, believing as they do that their faith community is in sole possession of the truth, that their spiritual path is the only one that leads to salvation or ultimate fulfillment. Pluralists, by contrast, adhere to the principle of "different strokes for different folks," and accept all religions as equally efficacious with respect to final ends. Inclusivists are somewhere in the middle; while they do privilege their tradition and hold that it contains the "most" truth when compared with others, they are nonetheless open to learning about and from other faiths, believing as they do that valuable insights could potentially come from all religions. Thus, their position goes beyond mere toleration, which "connotes a sense of putting up with something, not liking it but not stopping it or actively opposing it either," and embraces treating "religious others" with respect, "in hopes of learning from them" (p. 9). As the title of her book makes clear, Kiblinger is an inclusivist, and her avowed goal is to explore "inclusivism in Buddhist contexts, in order to encourage Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism to develop more theoretical work on [the] Buddhist response to religious diversity" (p. 3).

One of the signal virtues of Kiblinger's work, in the pursuit of her overall goal, is to give the reader a pretty thorough grounding in the philosophical issues that underlie the attempt to develop an inclusivist position within any religion. To this end, she explores and explains, by my count, fourteen different kinds of inclusivism: the three types of inclusivism distinguished by Johann Figl (essentialist-mystical, historical-revelatory, and inclusivistic-universal), that of Indologist Paul Hacker, and ten additional types drawn from various sources—alternative-ends-recognizing, superseding, aligning, privatizing, re-classifying, assuming a common core, acknowledging of non-comprehensive truth, teaming up versus secularism, claiming a multiple religious identity, and assigning new applications.

In addition to her typology of inclusivisms, Kiblinger provides us with an excellent analysis of different ways of thinking about religious doctrine as held by propositionalists, experientialists, and rule theorists. Then there is her explication of the three approaches traditionally taken by Buddhists to the "religious other," namely subordination, reinterpretation, and new application. She also lays out the differences in approach, when confronting the "religious other," between the "One-vehicle" and "Three-vehicle" schools within Buddhism (and their relation to the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth, to the principle of "skillful means," and to the "Three Body doctrine"). Readers of this book will learn which of the options outlined above Kiblinger supports, and her well-articulated reasons for choosing between them. For the record, Kiblinger is a pragmatist, a "rule theorist," and an "alternative-ends-recognizing inclusivist" who supports the "Three-vehicle" approach to truth and holds that the "notion of interdependence associated with path-oriented *śūnyatā* is perhaps the most important resource within the Buddhist tradition for our preferred form of inclusivism" (p. 86).

Throw in the insights with respect to cross-cultural dialogue that she judiciously culls from philosophers such as Alvin Plantinga, George Lindbeck, Paul Griffiths, Nicholas Rescher, and Alasdair MacIntyre, as well as her several examples drawn from Buddhism (some of which she praises, some criticizes) of thinking about the "religious other" (examples derived from ancient texts as well as modern Buddhists like the Dalai Lama, Masao Abe, Buddhādāsa, and Thich Nhat Hanh), and the reader has gained an effective introduction to the major issues, problems, and alternatives that face those who would create a Buddhist theology of inclusion with respect to those of other faiths—quite an accomplishment for a book of 130 smallish pages.

One minor criticism—while her book is clearly written, it does at times have a "dissertation" feel attributable to excessive language of the "Now we have covered subject x and next we will cover subject y" variety. A little of this "reader guidance" goes a long way. Despite this quibble, Kiblinger has given us a well-reasoned, well-researched, and thought-provoking exploration of how believing Buddhists might best contribute to interfaith dialogue by teaching and learning from the world's many "religious others." For the sake of a harmonious future, this is something that we need to get better at if we are to achieve the ultimate goal of Kiblinger's work: "peaceful and respectful relations with others" (p. 80).