



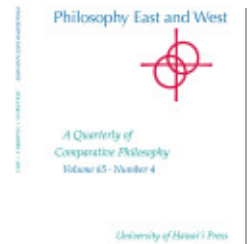
PROJECT MUSE®

Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies ed. by Steven Heine (review)

Eitan Bolokan

Philosophy East and West, Volume 66, Number 1, January 2016, pp. 348-351 (Review)

Published by University of Hawai'i Press



➔ For additional information about this article

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/pew/summary/v066/66.1.bolokan.html>

The embodied emotion of *qing* 情 is the main focus of chapter 4, “Qing, the Embodied Emotion.” Despite its various meanings, Seok says that *qing* is the “interactive, open and embodied experience of a human person in her world of concrete reality” (p. 140). Whereas emotions are ubiquitously understood as inner (Cartesian) states with only subjective content in the West, *qing* is objective and situational. To use my own example, our feeling sad at someone being mistreated is not to be thought of as a private event, but as an objective moral response to an immoral situation. *Qing* is an affective engagement with the world, and our emotions, as moral responses, are also a part of that world.

In Seok’s culminating chapter 5, “Character or Situation? Situated Confucian Virtue,” he successfully shows how the moral psychology of Confucianism can address the “situationist challenge” to the classical view of virtue ethics. That is, virtue ethics accounts for moral agency in terms of the development and possession of firm and fixed moral character traits. But contemporary research has found that stable, long-term dispositions do not exist in human psychology. This finding does not contradict the Confucian view of moral agency but supports it. Even though Confucianism is very committed to the importance of developing consistent, stable, and unified character traits, it also holds that these “inner” traits have limited regulatory power. The strength of this Confucian view is that limits are put on the power that dispositions might have to interfere with one’s being open to the contingencies of a situation. In short, being properly responsive in one’s world requires situational openness and flexibility, not just acting in character.

I would recommend this fine book to anyone. Although not a critique, I was left with this question: What emotion is not embodied? Our bodies situate us in the world even when we may not be able to identify *specific* bodily events when having an emotion. “Embodied emotions” really are those linked with specific physiological changes that can be identified by the ones having them or that can be observed by others. But to truly break free of the grip that the mind-body dichotomy has on us, we must realize that all emotions are forms of embodied cognition that involve a “physical mechanism” (the body) for “gathering, processing, storing, and accessing information.” No matter how hard we may try, we cannot get out of our bodies.

Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies. Edited by Steven Heine. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. vi + 299. Paper \$22.48, ISBN 978-0-19-975447-2.



Reviewed by **Eitan Bolokan**
Tel-Aviv University
eitan.shin@gmail.com

Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies is an impressive volume that marks a significant leap forward in the study of Zen Master Eihei Dōgen (1200–1253), founder of

the Japanese Sōtō School. Dōgen's life and thought are closely examined in light of the wider historical and religious contexts of Song dynasty China and the Kamakura era in Japan. This collection offers a careful consideration of Dōgen's rich literary legacy by examining his significance situated as he was at the historical crossroads between the Chinese Chan tradition and the birth of Japanese Zen. In particular, the volume contemplates the manner in which Dōgen's historical—perhaps mythological—figure has been endorsed and cultivated by the Sōtō sect throughout the centuries. By adhering to historical coherence and verifiability, it questions many of the themes and views that have been evoked to characterize the more symbolic aspects of Dōgen's character.

In his introductory essay editor Steven Heine states, "there remains a tendency in some approaches to Dōgen studies to be lacking in historical specificity and verifiability" (p. 5). Contributors respond to this challenge in striking fashion by offering the kind of analysis hitherto found only within Japanese academic circles. Indeed, the depth and breadth of perspectives offered here resemble in variety and range the voluminous *Dōgen shisō taikai* (Sōtōshū Shūgaku Kenkyūsho, ed. [Tokyo: Dōhōsha Shuppan, 1994–1995]) and the *Dōgen no nijū seiki* (Nara Yasuaki and Azuma Ryōshin, eds. [Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2001]). This commendable effort at widening the field follows and further develops initial Western academic collaborations, such as *Dōgen Studies*, edited by William R. LaFleur (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985).

The collection is divided into two sections—"Textual Studies" and "Historical Studies"—each containing five articles by prominent contributors from both sides of the Pacific. "Textual Genealogies of Dōgen" by William M. Bodiford begins by surveying the various versions of pivotal works attributed to Dōgen. Bodiford carefully examines, for the first time in English, the genealogies of the *Shinji shōbōgenzō*, the *Hōkyōki*, the *Eihei kōroku*, and *Eihei goroku* collections, in addition to the *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki*. He explores variants of the "Bendōwa," Dōgen's important early text from 1231, and explains the reasons behind the multiple editions of the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen's most celebrated writing. Remarking on the complexity of editorial work, Bodiford advises young scholars to "develop a healthy skepticism regarding the editorial policies of other scholars" (p. 18). This study is certain to have a lasting effect on the field in both its factual and methodological significance.

Steven Heine's "What Is on the Other Side? Delusion and Realization in Dōgen's 'Genjōkōan'" marks a novel attempt to interpret one of the most enigmatic passages in Dōgen's literary corpus from the "Genjōkōan" fascicle: "When perceiving one side, the other side is dark." Heine discusses the role of sense perception in the experience of awakening and analyzes the different commentaries offered by such prominent scholars as Kurebayashi Kōdō, Yoshizu Yoshihide, Matsumoto Shirō, and Ishii Seijun. Intriguingly, in the latter part of the article he extends his deliberation to the field of aesthetics by pointing to how Dōgen's *waka* poetry reflects the role of perception in "the process of awakening the authentic mind" (p. 71).

The final three essays in part 1 deal with the notions of practice and lineage in Dōgen's Zen. In "Just Sitting? Dōgen's Take on Zazen, Sutra Reading, and Other

Conventional Buddhist Practices,” T. Griffith Foulk refutes the idealistic claim that Dōgen rejected various Buddhist practices in favor of “pure Zen” (*junsui zen*). Foulk demonstrates Dōgen’s involvement in diverse practices and justly stresses the need for a broader understanding of the concept of *shikan* (“just,” “only”). Steven Heine’s “A Day in the Life: Dōgen’s View of Chan/Zen lineage in *Shōbōgenzō* Gyōji,” examines the hagiographical account of the thirty-five Zen patriarchs to make an interesting claim about the role of discipline as a condition for meditation in Dōgen’s Zen. Taigen Dan Leighton’s “Dōgen’s Approach to Training in *Eihei Kōroku*” serves as a much-needed contribution toward the understanding of actual practice in the context of the *jōdō*-style sermons.

The second section, “Historical Studies,” includes two significant essays by leading Japanese scholars Ishii Shūdō and Ishii Seijun. Ishii Shūdō’s “Dōgen Zen and Song Dynasty China” is masterfully translated by Albert Walter from Ishii’s famous study, *Dōgen Zen no seiritsushiteki kenkyū* (Tōkyō: Daizō Shuppan, 1991). Here, Ishii explores the affinity between Dōgen’s philosophy and that of prominent Chan masters of the Caodong and Linji lineages by focusing on the conflict between the supporters of Silent Illumination (*Mokushō zen*) and of Koan Introspection (*Kanna zen*). “New Trends in Dōgen Studies in Japan” by Ishii Seijun, former president of Komazawa University, clarifies numerous differences in methodology and ideology between the traditional study of Dōgen and more modern approaches emerging within the Sōtō School. These include, for example, the extent to which trends such as Critical Buddhism (*Hihan Bukkyō*) have influenced the reinvention of Traditional Theology (*Dentō shūgaku*) in relation to Contemporary Theology (*Gendai shūgaku*) and Gentle Theology (*Yasashii shūgaku*). By presenting the internal evolution and influences within Sōtō hermeneutics, Ishii’s study shows how, even within ostensibly dogmatic surroundings, scholars can still find themselves far from an absolute understanding of Dōgen.

Rounding out part 2 are articles including Albert Walter’s “Zen Syncretism” comparing Dōgen and Yongming Yanshou, William Bodiford’s “Remembering Dōgen” on memorials and commemorations for the Sōtō patriarch, and the highly intriguing “Disarming the Superpowers” on views of the supra-mundane by Carl Bielefeldt. All of these chapters critically examine crucial historical issues in the study of Dōgen by providing the reader with up-to-date resources emerging from both Japanese and Western academia.

Taken as a whole, *Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies* offers a robust model for future investigations in the field, and particularly for two thematic directions that are pivotal for understanding Dōgen within his broader context. The first theme involves an examination of the affinity between the vernacular *jishu* or informal lecture style of the fascicles that constitute the *Shōbōgenzō* in the Japanese vernacular and the formal lecture style of the Sino-Japanese *jōdō* sermons of the *Eihei kōroku*, especially in relation to Zen aesthetics and ritual studies. The second is a consideration of Dōgen’s Zen in light of conceptual and practical junctures in the ongoing development of Buddhist Dharma as it is understood in the Japanese Sōtō sect.

Both themes can be considered essential in clarifying the theoretical and practical position of Dōgen's approach to Zen in light of contemporary trends, such as mindfulness meditation and the role of modern spiritualities in comparative contexts. Ultimately, this important collection highlights the extent to which a critical investigation of both textual and historical sources is essential for our continuing evaluation of fundamental notions about Dōgen's Zen. The volume can be expected to become a standard for future studies and innovation in the field.

Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture. By Robin R. Wang. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. 1 + 250. Hardcover \$89.99, ISBN 978-1-107-00015-5. Paper \$28.99, ISBN 978-0-521-16513-6.



Reviewed by **Paul D'Ambrosio**
East China Normal University
pauljdambrosio@hotmail.com

To date there has been little serious scholarship that focuses directly on yinyang. While its significance is not often doubted, few scholars have seriously addressed the issue on its own. In *Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture* Robin Wang draws from a wide range of ancient and modern Chinese resources to explain the influence of yinyang thinking in areas ranging from military strategy, medicine, human relationships, and ethics to sexual practice and city planning. The introduction starts by offering a light survey of how yinyang theory has been treated in contemporary English- and Chinese-language scholarship, including English-language dictionary definitions. Instead of criticizing earlier studies, Wang points out their differences, noting that each has something positive to contribute to the discussion. She suggests that her own work can offer a more complex and diverse reading of yinyang. She argues that “yinyang can be thought of as a kind of horizon for much of Chinese thought and culture” (p. 5). In other words, while many thinkers have noted its particular usage and concrete application, Wang finds yinyang to be a characteristic of the structure of Chinese understanding. For her it is both a lens through which all things are viewed and a strategy for effective and productive interaction in both the social and natural worlds.

Wang immediately provides a philosophical treatment. Yinyang, as a correlative model, is broken down into six distinct forms: *maodun*, or contradiction and opposition; *xiangyi*, or interdependence; *huan*, or mutual inclusion; *hubu*, as complementarity or mutual support; and *zhuanhua*, or change and transformation. After this Wang discusses yinyang's productive capabilities as related to *sheng*, or generation and emergence, as well as harmony and efficacy. The reader is then already introduced to a rich philosophical treatment of the complexity of this issue and, as Wang