

from a sixteenth century popular history featuring the *ikkō-ikki*, and while *terauke* may have watered down the tradition somewhat, it hardly eliminated all the genuine commitment associated with this school. An interesting ideological paradox in the case of Shinshū is that orthodox Shin from the late sixteenth century onwards had been consistently cooperative with the government. This touches on the unresolved matter of what Shin politics in the late Edo period really were; suffice it to say that circa 1800 feudal-Confucian propaganda was being ramped up rhetorically at the same time that the *mibun* system was breaking down in economic and social reality – and the Shin tradition was openly flourishing. Under these circumstances who was coopting whom?

Let it also be noted that Hur refers to Shin ministers erroneously as monks, apparently on the basis of the literal reading of the character *sō* 僧. This common misuse (even among scholars) obscures the noncelibate status which was a fundamental point of sectarian and social difference in the Shin school (and which in this case strangely violates Hur's own definition of monks as "a community of religious renunciants" p. 378).

In summary, then, some central presuppositions of this book have to be recognized and treated very critically. Yet, in spite of these significant cautions, the book can be regarded as a major achievement which should serve as a great stimulus for more research into Tokugawa Buddhism by non-Japanese scholars – though such research will possibly yield different and varied interpretations of the subject with different sorts of balances.¹

Galen Amstutz
Ryukoku University

Katja Triplett

Menschenopfer und Selbstopfer in den japanischen Legenden: Das Frankfurter Manuskript der Mutsura Sayohime-Legende.

Münster: LIT-Verlag (Religiöse Gegenwart Asiens/ Studies in Modern Asian Religions Vol. 4), 2004, 388 pages.

Menschenopfer und Selbstopfer in den japanischen Legenden (Human Sacrifice and Self-sacrifice in Japanese Legends) examines the motif of ritual human sacrifice in Japanese legends. As her primary example, Katja Triplett, Associate Professor at the department of the Study of Religions of Marburg University and curator of the Museum of Religions in the same university, has translated into German and analyzed the Mutsura Sayohime legend, utilizing a version from the seventeenth century which is preserved at the Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Frankfurt.

1. Special notice should be given to an example of meticulous research on local documents by Alexander M. Vesey, "The Buddhist Clergy and Village Society in Early Modern Japan" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton 2003) which focuses in an original manner on the operation of the *mibun* system in Musashi.

The book is divided into five chapters and a conclusion, as well as a bibliography. Because the Japanese text was so difficult to handle, the author included three different versions for reference in her appendix: a photographic facsimile of the original cursive brushwriting; a version rendering or transcribing into modern printed *kana* and *kanji* the exact words of the cursive text; and finally a third version, referred to as interpretive, in which the second version was edited into a more readable form of the kind used in modern Japanese printed books of classics, i.e. with extra *kanji*, emendations, *furigana*, and sentence punctuation.

After providing an overview on the sources related to the motif of ritual human sacrifice in the Japanese context (Chapter 1), the author dedicates Chapter 2 to the translation of the Matura Sayohime legend. This is the story of a heroine, Sayohime, who sold herself to a merchant in order to provide financial support for a ritual which would assure religious salvation for her dead father. The merchant bought Sayohime with the purpose of offering her as a sacrificial victim to a giant serpent, the local deity. She was however saved from becoming a sacrificial offering by the power of the Lotus Sutra, and finally manifested herself as the goddess Benzaiten. The German translation of the Sayohime legend is accompanied by an interpretation of its illustrations.

Chapter 3 analyzes the theme of a cult of forced or voluntary ritual human sacrifice as it appears in the Frankfurt manuscript along with some variations regarding the same theme found in other manuscripts of the same legend.

Chapter 4, entitled “Die frühe Menschenopferforschung und die Frage nach der Historizität eines Menschenopferkultes in Japan,” deals with the historicity of a cult of ritual human sacrifice, a question which started from the early Edo period when there was a vivid interest in the theme of the human sacrifice in legends and rituals; the matter was also connected with Confucian teachings (p. 140). After providing an historical overview of the cultural background in Japan from the Edo period until the early twentieth century, Katja Triplett describes a dispute between Katō Genchi and Yanagita Kunio regarding the theme of human sacrifice (1911-1927). This dispute, she writes, is interesting not only because of the analysis of this motif itself, but also because it provides information on the situation of research on religions in that era. Moreover, she adds, Katō was the first modern researcher on religions who took as a source the Matura Sayohime Legend to support his argument (p. 147). In this regard Katō Genchi, chiefly a scholar of Shintō (p. 155), highlighted the idea that Buddhism had a positive influence on Japanese culture (p. 150) and brought Japan to the level of a “moral religion.” He argued that the cult of human sacrifice was “moralized” and did not develop further thanks to this religious tradition (pp. 152-154). Triplett points out that through such a thesis, i.e. that Japan, like other “civilized” countries, had abolished the “primitive” cult of human sacrifice, Japan acquired prestige, which supported an increase in the self-regard of the Japanese nation in the early twentieth century (p. 222). On the other hand, for the tradition of National Learning (*kokugaku*), which advocated the divine origin of the Japanese people, the theme of the cult of human sacrifice was completely inadmissible. This same opinion appears in the sources of the *minzokugaku*, which was deeply influenced

by the theories of the *kokugaku* (p. 223). In this context, Triplett writes that Yanagita Kunio, the founder of Japanese folklore studies, contradicting one of his previous statements, claimed that in Japan there had never been cults connected with human sacrifices (pp. 150-151, 223).

As for evidence about the historicity of a cult of human sacrifice in Japan, Triplett mentions an incident which occurred in 1925 during construction work at the Edo castle (Edojo) in Tokyo when the remains of several human skeletons were discovered. This gave rise to a discussion on human sacrifices in Japan and articles on this topic appeared in a special issue of the journal *Chūōshidan* of the Kokushi kōshūki (Society for the Study of Japanese History) under the title of “Jinrui gisei kenkyū” (Research on human sacrifice). (p. 159) The author analyzes what emerges from these articles and identifies general patterns on this issue (pp. 160 ff.). The chapter ends with a conclusive overview of the theses on the historicity of the cult of human sacrifice in Japan (pp. 173-176).

Chapter 5 is dedicated to studies regarding forced or voluntary ritual human sacrifice and to interpretations of the Matura Sayohime legend after 1945. Starting from the analysis of Yanagita Kunio’s article on this legend, entitled “Hitobashira to Matura Sayohime” (1927), the author provides the readers with a description of its reception and with the interpretations of various Japanese scholars in the field of literary studies. Then she explores its reception in the field of folklore studies, not only in Japan but also in Germany, featuring the contribution of Klaus-Albrecht Pretzell (186 ff.). Triplett points out that after 1945 the theories pro and contra the custom of ritual human sacrifice in Japan did not add to the understandings achieved in the early twentieth century. The last sections of Chapter 5 deal with the analysis of the historical development and transmission of the Matura Sayohime legend from ancient times and the author’s own reflections (pp. 191 ff.).

In the Conclusions the author notes that the legend under consideration presents strong religious and moral aspects. As an example, this legend shows the possibility of religious liberation for women, first through their bodies and later on through providing religious exercises and guidelines to follow in order to achieve liberation. However, Triplett further writes that this legend is not only concerned with the liberation of women but with the possibility of Buddhist salvation for all human beings. This legend is a fair example of how the theme of forced or voluntary ritual human sacrifice has been used for missionary purposes and for the moral guidance of the audience (p. 227).

The author’s translation of the Matura Sayohime legend is accurate and written in an agreeable style. A detailed interpretation and the transliterations of the illustrated manuscript, together with a precise analysis of the development and interpretations of this legend, complete this book. Unfortunately *Menschenopfer und Selbstopfer in den japanischen Legenden* does not provide an index of names and subjects, which as a reader I would have appreciated. In addition it is a pity that the quality of the publication itself is not particularly good, but this does not have anything to do with the work done by the author. Bearing in mind that a knowledge of Japanese is a prerequisite in order to appreciate this book, I would recommend *Menschenopfer und*

Selbstopfer in den japanischen Legenden to all those interested in Japanese religions and literature, as well as philological and folklore studies.

Elisabetta Porcu
Visiting Scholar, Ryukoku University

Cristina Rocha
Zen in Brazil: The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity.
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006, 256 pp.

The cross-cultural diffusion of Japanese religions is a topic that has been attracting considerable scholarly attention over the past two decades. In this anthropological study of Zen in Brazil, Rocha is concerned with the broad issues of how a Japanese Buddhist tradition spreads outside of Japan and how it is transformed in the process. In order to address these concerns, she examines the global carriers of Zen and how these are received, reinterpreted, and reshaped by the local Brazilian context.

The data for this study was drawn from “multi-sited research” conducted between 1997 and 2002, which included extensive fieldwork in Zen temples and centers in Brazil, interviews and archival research in the Sōtō-shū headquarters in Japan, and study of “spatially non-localized sites” (internet, Brazilian Buddhist email lists). The main site of research was the Busshin-ji Temple in Sao Paulo, which contained two “entangled congregations” formed by the Japanese Brazilian community and non-Japanese Brazilian members. Rocha explains that the “multi-sited” research methodology was required “in order to track the flows of Zen from Japan, Europe, and the United States into Brazil.” (p. 6)

Drawing on Arjun Appadurai’s theoretical framework of global scapes (see his *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minnesota, 1996), Rocha analyzes the diffusion of Zen through a study of the “flows of people” (immigrants, circulating *kaikyōshi* [missionaries] and intellectuals), the “flows of ideas” (through various media – books, movies), and the “flows of technology” (recent use of the internet, e-mailing lists). The primary carriers of Zen to Brazil have been the Japanese immigrants and the *kaikyōshi* sent by Sōtō-shū headquarters to care for them, and non-Japanese intellectual elites who imported the orientalist vision of modern Buddhism from France and the United States. The author gives considerable attention to the conflict between these two dominant forms of Zen.

For Japanese immigrants and their descendants, Zen is mainly understood in relation to devotional practices, care for the ancestors, and various festivities connected with Japanese cultural traditions. For non-Japanese Brazilian intellectuals, by contrast, Zen is primarily a “symbol of cosmopolitanism and modernity” and centered on *zazen* as a practice for the cultivation of the self. (p. 14) The author explains that the adoption of Zen by upper middle-class and upper-class non-Japanese in Brazil has been facilitated by alienation from the Catholic Church and its traditions and the very nature of modernity – a world in which pluralism and choice