

led to numerous drafts by the political parties as well as to the investigation from 1957 to 1964 by the Constitutional Commission which was established by law. The description and valuation of the work of the commission is one of the focal points of the book.

As to the change, the single parts and articles of the Japanese constitution are of different significance. The most important point is the renunciation of war under art. 9; it stands well to the fore. The author also delineates the old dispute about the demand that the constitution should be revised just on the account that it was a constitution dictated by the occupying force. Less room is taken by the other parts of the constitution: emperor, fundamental rights, parliament, cabinet, judicature, finance, local administration and the preamble. The state of discussion is described in detail by drawing upon the judgements of the lower courts and the Supreme Court. The author does not refrain from expressing his own opinion.

He assigns the decision whether the constitution has changed to the judicature which has to ascertain whether acts of the organs of state are unconstitutional or keep within the bounds of the constitution and perhaps improve it. It is not possible to ascertain a change of the constitution from the judgements of the Supreme Court as the court up to now has declared acts of suspected unconstitutionality constitutional and has not yet had to pass particular judgement by which, together with the statement of constitutionality, it would have said that the constitution had undergone a material change.

The book describes the state of things at the end of 1981. So it covers 35 years of the constitution of 1946. In view of the political, economic and social developments in Japan it should be permissible to say that the constitution has proved its value as the basic law.

Wilhelm Röhl

PETER FISCHER (ed.), PETER ALLES, TOKORO SHIGEMOTO, WATANABE HOYO, OMI KOSHO: Buddhismus und Nationalismus im modernen Japan. (Berliner Beiträge zur sozial- und wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Japan-Forschung, No.4). Bochum: Studienverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, 1979. 256 pages, DM 29.80

In the preface the editor points out how little attention has been paid so far by Japanese as well as by Western scholars to the part Japanese Buddhism played in the socio-political history of Japan during the first half of the twentieth century. The present book tries to fill this gap by providing five essays - two written especially for the book, the other three being translations from Japanese treatises previously published -, all centered on Nichirenism viewed in the context of modern Japanese nationalism.

The first essay by Peter Alles gives an outline of the connection that may be established between Buddhism, State, and nationalistic tendencies from 1868 to the end of the Second World War. In a roughly chronological order it sums up the main ideas of the leading figures of the nationalistic and ultra-nationalistic tradition of that period, lists the relevant Buddhist organizations together with their characteristics and relates the events that mark the significant stages of Buddhist rapprochement to the State. Particular stress is laid on the rôle played by ideologists such as Tanaka Chigaku and Honda Nissho as well as on the influence Nichirenism had on ultranationalists such as Ishiwara Kanji, Inoue Nissho, and Kita Ikki. The author also reproduces a newspaper article of 1944 revealing that a positive attitude towards war was assumed (or imposed and accepted?) by certain Japanese Buddhist sects.

Peter Fischer has provided the second essay, in which he raises the question why Buddhism and Shinto were treated unequally by both Japanese and Western scholars until after the end of the Second World War, and he points out that up to the present day research on the socio-political aspect of Buddhist activities and their sphere of influence in developing a nationalistic and militaristic government policy has lagged far behind research on Shinto and its ties with the State and government policy. In citing W.P. Woodards, an American expert in this field, the author remarks that "Buddhism was so completely overshadowed by Shinto's involvement with the Japanese government that it received practically no attention from the United States policy makers". Fischer also draws attention to the reluctance of Japanese Buddhists and Buddhist scholars to go into the problems of their own recent history, and he stresses the necessity of immediately making up for our ignorance in this domain by studying the primary sources of that period without losing time waiting for further Japanese publications on the subject.

The second major contribution to the book by Peter Fischer is a carefully annotated bibliography of 354 titles giving a comprehensive survey of postwar research, Japanese and Western (until 1978), on various aspects of the interrelation between Japanese Buddhism, nationalism, and the State during the period from 1868 to 1945. The list of books comprises eleven headings, the most important of which are: Bibliographies (43 titles), Chronological Tables (20 t.), Legislation (11 t.), Biographies (22 t.), History of Japanese Religions (42 t.), History of Japanese Buddhism (110 t.), Buddhism and Shinto (15 t.), Nichiren Buddhism and Nichirenism (66 t.). The large scope of the books presented and the quality of the descriptive notes make this bibliography a most valuable tool for all those doing research work on modern Japanese Buddhism.

Part Two of the book is made up of the translation of three short Japanese treatises (pp. 15-38):

Tokoro Shigemoto, *The Relation between Terrorism and Nichirenism* - Kita Ikki, Okawa Shumei, Inoue Nissho; tr. by Peter Fischer.

One of the most striking features of this essay is the author's concern to make clear that none of the three right-wing ideologists and terrorists treated

here had any profound understanding of the authentic ideas of the Lotus Sutra or of Nichiren thought. He considers it pure nonsense due to superficial journalism to establish a link between Nichirenism and the fascism of these three persons.

Watanabe Hoyo, *The Development of Modern Nichirenism*; tr. by Peter Alles.

The author briefly retraces the development of Kita Ikki's and Inoue Nissho's ideology and concludes that neither of them can be considered a Nichirenist in the strict sense of the word. In quoting the example of several outstanding Nichiren opinion leaders, particularly Tanaka Chigaku and Honda Nissho, he outlines the formation of modern understanding of Nichiren thought as based on the concept of "national entity" (*kokutai*), which, in the eyes of nationalist ideologists, ought to be the basis of modern morality.

Omi Kosho, *Fascism and Buddhism - Nichirenism as a Nationalistic Ideology*; tr. by Ina Bretschneider and Midori Fujita-Becker.

The author of this essay stresses that Nichirenism must not be confounded with the actual teaching and conduct of the 13th century sect founder Nichiren. He puts emphasis on the ideology of the persons treated. A sufficient number of judiciously selected citations from Tanaka Chigaku's writings retrace the development of his nationalistic and imperialistic ideas. The author maintains that Tanaka aimed at a sort of "religious fascism" with the Nichiren sect as an established church and the Nichirenists taking the lead of the nation's destiny as well as of the unification of mankind, backed by a powerful military force. In a similar way he presents the ideas of Honda Nissho, underlining his critical attitude toward such ideals as the formation of labour unions, wage claims (considered to be excessive), the Russian Revolution, and the anti-militaristic attitude of socialism. He emphasizes that Inoue Nissho was not a priest of the Nichiren sect, as frequently stated erroneously, but simply a "right-wing adventurer". He shows the similarities between Kita Ikki's ideas and those of Tanaka Chigaku and expounds Ishiwara Kanji's theory of the "very last war" and the connections Ishiwara established with Nichiren's ideas.

One of the striking features of the three treatises translated from Japanese is the fact that they have in common the authors' concern to clearly keep apart the true Nichiren doctrine from modern Nichirenism mingled with nationalistic and imperialistic ideas.

The notes accompanying the five essays contained in the book are so abundant, detailed, and furnished with exact bibliographical references that even the reader not at all acquainted with the historical facts will get a good understanding of the subject matter. Indices of proper names, titles, societies and parties further increase the utility of the book and make it useful also as a reference work, apart from being an excellent reader.

This publication may be classed as an example of provocative academia: its presentation of facts may not please everybody. Notwithstanding, it constitutes a long awaited, necessary complement to the traditional research on Japanese Buddhism, and it is a stimulus to further inquiry into the subject.

Robert Heinemann