

Preface

The idea for this book first came from Professor Sonoda Kōyū of Wakayama University who told me about Ryōgen when I went to visit him in Wakayama as I was finishing my doctoral dissertation on Saichō. Professor Sonoda kindly sent me copies of two documents from the *Heian ibun*: Ryōgen's will and a set of twenty-six rules, both of which are translated in the appendixes of this book. I did not begin working on Ryōgen until 1982–83, when I held a Japan Foundation Fellowship. Around the same time, a friend arranged an introduction to Hirabayashi Moritoku, the author of a biography of Ryōgen who was kind enough to discuss several issues with me. A good friend, Ichishima Masao of Taishō University, told me of a childhood illness that had been cured through prayers to Ganzan Daishi (Ryōgen). As a result, he named his son Gen, taking the character “gan” from Ryōgen's posthumous title Ganzan Daishi. Such stories helped me to understand the role of Ryōgen in contemporary Japan.

I had initially intended to write one or two short articles on Ryōgen to help with my tenure. The deeper I went into Ryōgen's biography, however, the more issues I found that interested me. My short project gradually evolved into a much longer work that lasted for many years. My studies of Ryōgen have been sporadic; I've worked intensively for short periods then put the manuscript away for considerable time as I worked on other projects. The result is a book that is somewhat idiosyncratic as it reflects my changing interests over the years.

Recently, several events helped me decide that it was time to publish this work. My own interests have taken me in other directions, and I came to feel that additional time spent on this study would not necessarily improve it. Thus I decided that the time had come to publish it so that others could use and build on it. In addition, the contingencies of the academic calendar and promotion to full professor necessitated

distributing the text to readers. In the process of being considered for promotion, I became aware that Eishō Nasu of the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley had just finished a doctoral dissertation on Ryōgen: “Doctrine and Institution in Japanese Tendai Buddhism: A Study of Jie Daishi Ryōgen (912–985).” After meeting with Professor Nasu, we agreed that I would include three of his translations in my book: (1) the major source for the Ōwa debates, the *Ōwa shūronki*; (2) Ryōgen’s will; and (3) Ryōgen’s compilation of twenty-six rules. I am deeply indebted to Professor Nasu for agreeing to this arrangement and helping us to overcome what could have been an awkward situation. His fine translations enhance this study. Although I have edited his translations by eliminating notes that were already covered in the body of my book and adding a very few of my own, the translations are still substantially as I received them. I have been deeply impressed by his rendering of some of the more difficult passages.

An earlier version of chapter 12 is scheduled to be published in *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*, volume 1: *New Directions in Western Research*, edited by Barbara Ruch (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, forthcoming). I thank Professor Ruch for permission to use a revised version in this volume.

The General Administration of the Tendai School (Tendai shūmucho) graciously provided a generous subvention that aided in the publication of the book. Needless to say, their generosity does not imply that they agree or disagree with the contents of this book. Saitō Enshin of Taishō University was invaluable in aiding me in the submission of the application for funds.

Finally, I owe debts of gratitude to several organizations and to many people who have supported me in this project over the years, either directly or indirectly. Besides the Japan Foundation mentioned above, a Sesquicentennial Fellowship and several summer grants from the University of Virginia provided me with the time to work on the book. The work of Hirabayashi Moritoku and Hori Daiji on Ryōgen should be acknowledged because of the many leads it provided as I pursued this study. In fact, without their pioneering work this work would have been much more difficult.

My brother-in-law, Fukasawa Shigeyuki, and his family have graciously provided hospitality during my many visits to Tokyo. Stanley Weinstein of Yale, my mentor and close friend, has freely offered his encouragement and advice. The many friends I have made in Japanese academic circles over the years have played a vital role in sustaining my

enthusiasm. I have already mentioned several of them above. Although I cannot name them all, I would be remiss if I did not mention some of them. Ōkubo Ryōshun of Waseda, Sueki Fumihiko of Tokyo University, Yoshizu Yoshihide and Ikeda Rosan of Komazawa, Tonegawa Hiroyuki of Taishō University, and Nomoto Kakujō (editor of the *Zoku Tendai-shū zensho* [Continuation of the collected works of the Tendai school]) have provided me with both material and spiritual sustenance (in several senses) over the years. In the West, Jackie Stone, Ruben Habito, Robert Rhodes, Neil McMullen and Jean-Noël Robert have helped through their research and interest in Japanese Tendai. The research of Daniel Stevenson, Daniel Getz, and Paul Swanson on Chinese T'ien-t'ai has helped me to look at Japanese Tendai in new ways. Two anonymous readers provided me with valuable advice. Patricia Crosby of University of Hawai'i Press has been enormously helpful with this project and others. Finally, I welcome the friendship of Professor Yoritomi Motohiro of the International Center for Japanese Studies, under whose auspices I have put the final touches on the book. I look forward to continuing these friendships and to developing new ones in the coming years as my work takes me in different directions.

I thank my wife and children for their understanding and support over the years. Finally, in the spirit in which Ryōgen honored his mother, I dedicate this book to my parents and thank them for their many years of support and understanding.

A Note on Dates and Ages

Dates are given in the format of month, day, and year. For example, Ryōgen died on 1-3-985, the third day of the first month of 985. Although the third day of the first month would actually fall near the end of 984, I have followed the convention found in many Japanese reference books of simply converting the Japanese year to the year that most closely corresponds to the Western calendar. Ages are given following Western conventions.

