

Chuichi Fukaya — Opening Words: “Fukushima is Safe” Announcement—A Call to Eliminate the Damages of Hearsay

Media reports about “detection of radiation at so-and-so Sv” initially came from good intentions to inform people of dangers; however, the media’s fear-mongering reports have led to rumors that are causing suffering to the people of Fukushima and undermining the efforts for restoration. People at one time claimed that “not even weed would grow for fifty years” in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and yet, those cities were resurrected only half a year later; and today, sixty-seven years later, there is sustained growth of trees in the cities and fishery is abundant. The media and all of Japan should come to realize that the most fearful element of radiation crisis is not the radiation itself but the news reports that inflame the fear of the “ash of death” and create real damage caused by gossip. We should all declare that “Fukushima is Safe” and support the efforts toward restoration.

Harumichi Fukagawa — Historical Resources of Tenrikyo Overseas Mission (29) Historical Resources of the Manchurian Mission [13]

Among the major events taking place in 1939, there are the following three: salvation work for nephew Teruoki Watanabe, events related to the passing away for rebirth of cousin Masayoshi Nanbara, and first visit to Tianjin and Beijing.

Ichiro Soda — Histories of the Tenrikyo Mission (7) From Kyoto to Shiga, and then to the Entire Country

The teachings took hold in Kyoto when Rokubei Oku entered the faith in 1873. Later, Genjiro Fukaya entered the faith and formed the fraternity called Shidokai; this led to significant growth, and the fraternity later became the Kawaramachi Grand Church.

The path from Shidokai crossed through Ujodawara in southern Kyoto, and then reached Shiga, from where it then expanded throughout the country.

Currently, there are six grand churches in Shiga Prefecture. All of these originate from the mission that crossed through Ujodawara. There are over two thousand six hundred churches that sprung from these six grand churches. Is there a connection to Shiga’s landscape that explains this subsequent growth? If so, what could it be? The reason could be found in the personality of the Omi merchants.

Omi merchants vary in size from small-scale peddlers to businesses owning storefronts in various regions; one thing they shared in common was that they crisscrossed back and forth from Shiga to the places where they did their business. It is easy to imagine missionaries who were naturally able to engage in mission in far-flung areas.

One example of the mission being carried forth by Omi merchants from Shiga to places far removed is the path going to Nōgata of Fukuoka Prefecture, which led to the founding of Chikushi, Saikai, and Asakura Churches. Also, the path was transmitted to Tochigi Prefecture, from which the Nikko, Tsuga, Nakane, and Namiki Churches originated.

Among other large churches that directly or indirectly came about as result of the path travelling through Shiga Prefecture are Gakuto, Nagoya, Chichibu, Gimi, and Tono.

Koji Fukaya — A Growth of Faith through Ofudesaki (3) Ofudesaki Part 1:1-3

In the first verse, the subject of “looking” or “find” is not clear mainly because the subject is often omitted in Japanese, especially in *waka* style. That is to say, who is “I” in English version? Rather, when we use the verb “looking,” we need the subject (and the object), which means that a sense of sight is one that strongly leads to objectivization in comparison to other ones such as touch. Objectivization is a function that makes the line between active and passive clear, e.g. “look” and “be looked.” From this the subject in the first verse is not clear but the function of objectivization of “looking” implicitly introduces a potential subject.

The verse 2 version uses many negative words such as “never” or “nothing,” including double negation in Japanese version. It—which is the verse 2, namely the potential subject of “looking”—

denies the object and the potential subject itself, which means self-denying. Through a dialectic process of these negations of the subject and the object, the potential subject implicitly shows its existence, which appears in the word “natural.”

Finally, in the verse 3, the potential subject explicitly appears as “God.” After the verse 4, Ofudesaki explains the natures of “God” one by one.

Midori Horiuchi — Connecting “Life”: The Phenomenon of Life and Death (7) How Can We Come to Terms with Death [5]

Study of “death” is a study of “life.” Tokyo University Professor Susumu Shimazono, the first unit leader of Global COE Program, “Development and Systematization of Death and Life Studies,” has stated that “death and life studies cannot ignore the issue of what life is, as well as the fundamental issue for understanding the human being of how to render meaning to human life and death.” There is a dimension of trying to respond to the need for “preparatory education for death.” “Preparatory education for death” in Japan has been urged forward by Alphonse Deacon, who defined it as “education to think about how to spend the time remaining until death.”

Takanori Sato — The Unexpected Effects the Radiation Leak Accident at the Fukushima No. 1 Plant (4) Radiation Pollution in Vegetables and Grains and the Issue of Its Removal

From the 1960s to the very recent (1963-2008), during the time when United States and Russia as well as China conducted nuclear experiments in the atmosphere, Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology had conducted studies to tract the changing levels of radioactive Cesium 137 found in the daily diet of the Japanese people. As a result, levels were highest in 1963 when the tests began, at 2.03 Bq/Kg for Japan as a whole. The levels began to drop slowly in the following years, and became undetectable by 2008. On December 4, 2011, Kyoto University and Asahi Newspaper choose twenty-six families in Fukushima Prefecture, sixteen in Kanto, eleven in western Japan (of Chubu, Kansai, and Kyushu), to a total of fifty-three families, and tested for the levels of radioactive Cesium in their daily diet and drinks. As a result, those in Fukushima Prefecture were found to consume 4.01 Bq/Kg per day, in Kanto at 0.35 Bq/Kg, and undetectable in western Japan. The 4.01 Bq/Kg detected in Fukushima Prefecture in 2011 was twice the level of 2.03 Bq/Kg found in 1963 when nuclear tests were still conducted. In April of 2012, the government enacted a new standard for radiation found in foods to be “no more than 1 mSv total for the year.” The accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant was a calamity beyond our expectations that forced us to recognize that we live in a “risk society” that demands self-responsibility. The radiation crisis is a weighty theme that the Japanese cannot avoid.

Saburo Yagi — The Path Towards Normalization (5) Self-Reliant Life for the Disabled

Our country’s perspective on self-reliance is a general one based on “physical self-reliance,” of being able to care for oneself, and on “economic self-reliance,” of being able to support one’s own life and those of the family. The idea of productivity—a key theme in capitalist countries—form the major ingredient for this perspective.

Since 1981—the International Year of Disabled Persons—the conceptualization of self-reliance for the disabled has changed remarkably. Influenced by new ideas of the human self, such as respect for the individual, there has been a shift from traditional views of self-reliance to social self-reliance such as “self-reliance of decision-making” as well as “self-reliance of individuality and respect.” Self-reliance in the everyday life is no longer an absolute issue but a relative one.

For those with high levels of disability, such as those considered unable to sustain everyday life on one’s own, the ability for the disabled to make own decisions in order to effectively use social resources and to manage them, in turn, improves their life as a whole: this change (QOL) is now considered a way for the disabled’s self-reliance.