

## Chuichi Fukaya — Thoughts on “Funerals” II

When one feels death in proximity, one will seek to evade it. Human beings are created to evade death as a way to realize joyous life in this world.

Also, humans undergo sexual reproduction and its individual units are not immortal. These qualities are regarded as vital elements in enabling multi-facet civilization and culture to bloom rather than as uninteresting simple cell existence.

In other words, “everyone seeks to evade death but cannot do so” is the necessary condition to realize joyous life in this world. And the means and mechanism to dissolve the paradox of “savoring the sadness of death in order to evolve and savor the joys and pleasure of life” are to be found in the theology of passing away for rebirth and the performance of the funeral.

## Mikio Yasui — Short History of Tenrikyo Theology (85) Kin'ai Manuscripts [6]

These transcriptions of the Divine Directions did not reference the original version preserved at the Jiba. It is worth noting with caution that these were conveyed to the transcriber through various routes and in various mediums. Also, among them, there are many instances of copying errors and omissions. It is important to examine these transcriptions while keeping these issues in mind. What these transcripts provide is a window into how the faith was conveyed to distant areas.

## Chuichi Fukaya — Deep Reflections on the Life of Oyasama (4) Day of Origin

When we reflect upon our stance in following the Divine Model from the events unfolding on the day of origin of the Original Revelation, the day of origin of our own faith is not the day when our spiritual parent or missionary spoke to us for the first time; rather, it is the day when we made a resolve to have faith in this path based on those initial words that we received.

This also applies to those who are second and third generation members of the faith. Children of those who have faith do not automatically become faithful members. Only through the individual making a resolve to follow the path and undertake such life can we say that there is an authentic conversion.

However, not all people will become a Yoboku. Therefore, there is a need to receive recognition and cooperation from family for a person to become a Yoboku, but the Divine Model shows us that such recognition may not be easy to garner.

## Ichiro Soda — Histories of the Tenrikyo Mission (34) Extra Tidbit 1: Tenrikyo in Faraway Places and Islands

I will point out several interesting matters in regard to the Tenrikyo mission.

Tenrikyo spread throughout Japan within the ten years following 1887. This was because there were many people who travelled to faraway places in order to engage in missionary work. For example, there were extremely large numbers of people who journeyed to places more than a day's travel away in order to do missionary work. Without such phenomenon, it would not have been able to achieve having a new church established in all of the prefectures with the exception of Okinawa.

The Tenrikyo mission to islet regions is also noteworthy. There exist islands of similar circumstances and yet differing in the number of churches, with some having many and others very few. For example, Shodo Island, Nami O-shima, Yajiro Island, and Nakadori Island all possess a large number of church in comparison to its population and size. While it is difficult to generalize, we may understand this as a result of large number of churches being established on the island when the religious fervor of the island became particularly heightened due to its isolation as an island.

## Akio Inoue — A Preliminary Study of Tenri Linguistic Theology: The Future Image of “Koto” Worldview (6) A Semantic Theory of “Mono” and “Koto” [4]

The decisive difference between the Genesis and Part Two of the Service is the reversal of heaven and earth. In the latter, informed by the philosophy of the Indirect Explanation of the Divine Providence referring to the “flow of earth and heaven” found in I Ching, heaven, which seeks to flow upward, and earth, which seeks to sink downward, are reversed as “earth and heaven,” and through this exchange between heaven and earth, mono (thing) and koto (act) emerge. The hand movements of Part Two of the Service beautifully illustrate this symbolism. Tsukihi, God the Parent, from above heaven encounters

the earth in the muddy ocean. The place of this encounter—that is, husband and wife modeled after earth and heaven—holds Joyous Life as its purpose and blesses the beginning of this world. The phrase “I never tell you anything wrong” takes the hand movement of illness with the hand serving as a pillow. However, when illness is interpreted as God's guidance, as taught that “There is nothing at all which should be called illness. It is but a road sign or an admonition from God,” it can be interpreted to imply that which converges with the Joyous Life, which is the purpose of human creation; the final words of prayer with the hands together, “Yoshi, yoshi,” is a prayer that seeks to enable the purpose of human creation. “Wrong” is seen as assuming the “good thing,” to which it will be sublimated. In this article, I will also comment upon the translation of the Bible into the Kesen dialect.

## Koji Fukaya — A Growth of Faith through Ofudesaki (30) Part IV:116-134

What I learned this time is about God the Parent's hardships as found in verses 122-125 regarding the creation. God's hardships are not the same as those experienced by people. In God's mind, there is no mental improvement to overcome challenges, but only the single heart to save all human beings. Therefore, it is hard to understand God's hardships by comparing it with mental experience experienced by people.

Ofudesaki talks about muddy ocean and loaches. According to 124, when God saw many loaches in a muddy ocean “drew them up,” “consumed them all,” and “through providence brought them up into human beings step by step.” The devotion in this whole process is God's hardships. That is to say, it is the hardship to raise them up into human beings.

## Masanobu Yamada — New Religion's Missions in Brazil (18) Organizational Development of Japan's New Religions[2]

Currently, there are ninety churches within the diocese of the Mission Headquarters of Brazil, and many of these churches are concentrated in the southeast region (the states of São Paulo and Paraná) which had large population of those of Japanese descent. Because Tenrikyo established its foundation within the Japanese communities, there is a high percentage of Japanese descent among the ethnic composition of the followers. Many of the followers of Seicho no Ie (2.4 million, 1994) and Perfect Liberty (600,000; 1994), which are both well known in Brazil, are non-Japanese descent. In comparison to these religious organization, Tenrikyo, whose membership number roughly 30,000, cannot be said to be active. However, in recent years, young members of Tenrikyo in Brazil have begun to explore the “de-Japanization” of the church. A student seminar, planned by these members, was held from 2009, and is noteworthy for its efforts to create an atmosphere that fits the Brazilian personality.

## Midori Horiuchi — Connecting “Life”: The Phenomenon of Life and Death (34) On “Life” [5]

In early August, nine infants were discovered in a Bangkok apartment, and they were taken into protective custody by authorities together with their accompanying babysitters. This news captured attention because they were all fathered by a single Japanese male. The unexpected “use” of surrogate birth, where one male would father several children through surrogate births, demonstrated that advanced reproductive technologies could easily be used to satisfy the concealed desires of one individual. In Japan, a bill to regulate reproductive technology is expected to be presented to the National Diet in the fall. Yet, this bill would not prevent cases such as this. Also, among children born from sperms donated by those who prefer anonymity, there is a call to include the right to know the circumstances of their birth and the origin of the sperms.

## Jiro Sawai — Great East Japan Earthquake and Religion (4) Café de Monk

From May of 2011, volunteer religionists, comprised mostly of Buddhist, hosted “Café de Monk,” a mobile café. With hopes to provide a place of solace from lives under dehumanizing conditions surrounded by debris, the volunteers provided freshly brewed coffee and various desserts—unimaginable at the disaster regions at the time—and visited several evacuation centers and temporary shelters. Often, they listened to the stories of the victims who came to their café. This is still continued today and has been held over 130 times. Its purpose is not to convey a particular faith stance or to evangelize, but to provide comfort to the victims of the disaster. Such purpose sustains this activity to this day.