

Chuchi Fukaya — Opening Words: Muddy Ocean and a Mission Statement

I am an acquaintance of a young man who works for a company whose headquarters is located in Yaesu of Tokyo. His company articulates a mission statement that its employees could proudly espouse and that defines a specific way to carry out business. Moreover, it seeks to create a “muddy ocean” within the company that would encompass resources and raw materials aimed to maximize its future possibilities.

An articulation of a mission statement that provides a vision of what needs to happen now and a cultivation of human energy that opens up the future: these are themes that we need to address immediately, given our role as pathfinders of the world.

Mikio Yasui — Short History of Tenrikyo Theology (101) Kitano Manuscripts [3] Transcriptions of Copies of the “Osashizu”

I will examine a volume from the Kitano manuscripts, a source that I have introduced in parts previously. Early missionaries from the Kitano Branch Church were already engaged in salvation work and expanding the church, carrying copies of the Divine Directions and the Ofudesaki.

Chuchi Fukaya — Deep Reflections on the Life of Oyasama (20) Idle Talk: In Regard to “Seed” and “Mind”

It is the author’s view that, in regard to the relationship between “seed” and soul, the “seed” forms the core of the soul. In the “seed,” there is no distinction between that “seed” and this “seed”; “seeds” are all uniformly “seeds.” That is, among the foundation of the “soul” and the authentic nature of human beings, there is no distinction; all are equal and same.

The “mind” is a functioning and working of the “soul.” The “mind,” as the working of the “soul,” is the functioning and movement of the “soul,” as noted in the phrase, “the mind (kokoro) is the mind because it changes constantly (koro koro).” When the “soul”/human being is active, dust always appear. If one stays put and does not move, there will not be any dust; however, no joy will come of such inactivity as well. God the Parent created the human beings because such inactive world would be boring and not joyous; thus, human beings must become active without any fear of having dust into the mind.

Akio Inoue — A Preliminary Study of Tenri Linguistic Theology: The Future Image of “Koto” Worldview (22) Chapter Three: Watsuji Tetsuro and “Nihongo to tetsugaku no mondai” [3]

In Nihongo no tetsugaku he (Towards philosophy in the Japanese language). Miyoko Hasegawa provides a commentary on Watsuji’s pursuit of his quest while also explaining in detail as to how Watsuji must have caught a glimpse of the connection between his attempt at “philosophy mediated by Japanese language” and an “unknown muddy ocean” that does not submit to any previously known “philosophy,” and how his closing words of “appear before us, philosophers contemplating through the Japanese language” contain a tinge of difficulty. In regard to Watsuji’s theme, Akira Yanabu’s writings in “Mono chusin no tetsugaku to koto chusin no tetsugaku” (Philosophy based on material and philosophy based on event, in Translation of Selected Books of the World, Hikaku nihongo ron [Comparative study of the Japanese language]) are required readings; but there is also Nihongo to Nihon shiso: Motoori Norinaga, Nishida Kitaro, Mikami Akira, Karatani Kojin (The Japanese language and Japanese thought: Motoori Norinaga, Nishida Kitaro, Mikami Akira, Karatani Kojin, Fujiwara shoten, 2008), a tour de force written by Makoto Asari, who currently teaches Japanese language at National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations, who encapsulates logic, Japanese language theory, and Japanese grammar theory on the view that a Japanese engages in philosophical thought. He introduces and critiques various related thinkers from fields such as philosophy, folk studies, history, literature, translation theory, and linguistics; he also provides his views on the depths of Watsuji’s interpretation of Heidegger. I will touch upon it in later articles if there is space.

Takanori Sato — Creatures That Appear in the “Story of the Origin” (10) In Regard to the “Shachi” and “Shachihoko” [1]

In this article, I examined the difference between “shachi” and “shachihoko.” “Shachi” refers to the orca, and is related to the dolphin, a mammal, and its length extends 9 meters for males and 7 meters for females. Its body color is black on the backside and white on the stomach side. It can be seen swimming in herds in the Pacific Ocean along the eastern coasts of Hokkaido as well in the Sea of Okhotsk as well as in the Pacific Ocean far off the coasts of Wakayama Prefecture. On the other hand, “shachihoko” is an imaginary animal fitting the description of its composing Chinese character. Its head is similar to a tiger and has sharp edges on its back; its tail is curved backwards constantly. It is thought to be effective in fighting fires. Models of this animal are installed in the ends of the rooftop of castles. It also goes by the name of “matsukasa-uo” (pinecone fish).

Koji Fukaya — Milepost Usage of the Ofudesaki (6) Regarding “kotowari”

“Kotowari” appears in the Ofudesaki with the basic meaning of “conveying truth”; it is also often used to imply “to communicate prior to the event (to

predict).” In several verses, the term is preceded by a modifier of “seippai ni” (as much as I can) to convey the way in which God the Parent is doing the utmost whenever showing human beings what they must see. Sometimes, God goes as far as to state, “From now on, there will be warnings (kotowari) no longer” (XIII:8) in order to urge human understanding.

However, in the verse that states, “Though you turn away those who come day by day, their number will only increase step by step” (II:37), there is greater emphasis on conveying the truth rather than on warning about the future. Also, in the verse that states “The truth recorded by My writing brush: lo, it is seen! Your minds will be spirited” (XII:44), we are not to be disheartened when the predicted event appears; rather, there is a call for spirited minds with an exclamatory wording of “lo.”

Jiro Sawai — Reflections on the Words of the Osashizu (12) “Path” in “Timely Directions” of Osashizu, Volume 1

In Part One of the Osashizu, the term “path” appears frequently in the “Timely Directions.” “Timely Directions” are “God’s directions given in important moments”; therefore, its contents is intimately connected to its contemporary Tenrikyo context. Pursuing Tenrikyo history during the time of the writing of Part One, we find such events as the determination of the Honseki, establishment of the church, institutionalization of the Besseki and Service. When we keep in mind such historical context and read the “Timely Directions” with special attention to “path,” we find that the term “path” begins to appear in Divine Directions containing similar messages from about the time of the establishment of the church. I will discuss this issue in the current article.

Masanobu Yamada — New Religion’s Missions in Brazil (34) Varieties in Salvation: Tenrikyo [4]

In the previous article, I confirmed how a direct prayer to God was a new style of prayer for people who were familiar with folk Catholicism in which numerous saints comprise the object of worship. Therefore, drawing upon Christian religious landscape, I characterized as “Protestantization” the process by which people converted to Tenrikyo and found faith in “God the Parent” as an “absolute monotheistic God.” In this article, I will carry out a more detailed study of the meaning of Tenrikyo’s unique “monotheism” and what it meant in terms of doctrine.

Kazukuni Watanabe — Paving the Way Towards Local Community Welfare: Creation of a New Culture of Philanthropy (14) Street Collection as a Means of Fundraising [2]

A group well known for street collection fundraising is Ashinaga Students’ Fundraising Bureau, whose purpose is to support higher education for orphans who lost their parents to automobile accidents and other tragedies. Taking into account its precursor, its fundraising activities stretch across half a century; we can identify various factors that lead to street collections, such as student’s perspective informed by social activism, organization of activities, and first-person activism. Fundraising is carried out for other causes related to combating children’s poverty, and such street collection garners expectations to take on the role of speaking to the society about societal issues. An issue to take up in the future is how to construct a template to create and manage a “reference point” that connects the general populace and societal themes, in the manner that is done by street collections.

Hisao Kuwabara — Messages from Ruins (8) Journal of Travels in England [4] The Moral of the Dragon

In England, dragon figures are often inscribed upon painting and sculptures found in churches in art museums. In Christian culture, dragons are the symbol of evil; Saint George, who is said to have defeated dragons in the hagiography, The Golden Legend, became popular during the time of the Crusades as a hero who fought evil, and he became a patron saint of cities and states across Europe. On the other hand, dragons were epitome of evil and were bodily manifestations of courage and ferocity; they also came to symbolize the land and water and became sublimated into human souls. In the City of London, the dragon became the symbol of the town, and in Norwich, dragons began to appear in religious processions sponsored by the guilds and to become popular among the people.

Yomei Mori — Preliminary Thoughts on African-European Relations as Found in Congolese Society (6) Slave Trade in the Atlantic Ocean and the Congolese Kingdom

The triangular trade established between Europe, Africa, and the American continent weakened the Congolese Kingdom. This was also intrinsically related to Columbus’s discovery of the new continent. Spain’s destruction of the Aztec empire and the conquest of the Inca empire and system of property ownership under the name of “commission” forced extreme labor upon the native people. Furthermore, through infectious diseases carried over from Europe, the indigenous population was decimated. In order to supplement this dwindling labor force, large numbers of black slaves were imported from the African continent.