

Chuichi Fukaya — Opening Words: Five Years Since the Nuclear Accident

In a recent issue of a weekly magazine, Hiroshi Kainuma, an up-and-coming sociologist researching nuclear power even prior to the nuclear accident, noted that “There are still many stereotyped statements that ‘Fukushima is dangerous and the people there are living in fear.’ However, data and figures, available to anyone, speak of a Fukushima as it stands today that is entirely different from such conception. It has been five years since the earthquake disaster. It is now time to search for ‘enjoyable’ ways to become involved while being aware of Fukushima’s ‘true’ condition.”

Also, Yoshiko Sakurai, a commentator, has said, “the Nuclear Regulation Authority has demanded a 400,000 page report just to conduct an experiment and to reactivate an experimental nuclear reactor, designed for research purpose, that is 1/3,000,000,000 in scale size in comparison to a commercial reactor. As a result, pioneering research carried out at Kyoto University, which had attracted global attention, is being stalled.”

It is natural to demand adequate safety when dealing with radiation; but “too much is as the same as having too little” also holds true. We need to engage in this issue with awareness of accurate facts and calm demeanor.

Mikio Yasui — Short History of Tenrikyo Theology (102) Kitano Manuscripts [4] 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.

Chuichi Fukaya — Deep Reflections on the Life of Oyasama (21) Theological Debate at the Oyamato Shrine

The writing of the Ofudesaki began in 1879, and after Part Two was completed in March of the same year, there was a five year hiatus until January of 1884 when Part Three was written; on the other hand, within the year and a half from January of 1884 to June of 1885, 952 verses, making up 55.6% of the entire Ofudesaki, were written.

That is, while we can surmise that the writing of the Ofudesaki did not coincide with the period in which the lyrics and hand dance of the twelve songs of the service were being taught and the preparation of the service was being moved forward relatively steadily, after 1884, many events occurred that went against the wishes of Oyasama, as noted in the verse, “should you err, I shall inform you by verse” (Ofudesaki I:23). Also, the need emerged to teach those close to her, as noted in “Because you forget, I have informed you with the tip of My writing brush” (Osashizu, August 23, 1904). For such reasons, large number of verses of the Ofudesaki was written in 1884.

The theological debate at the Oyasama Shrine in 1884 foretold the emergence of God’s intentions through the numerous verses of the Ofudesaki and was a symbolic event that signaled the intensification of efforts towards world salvation.

Akio Inoue — A Preliminary Study of Tenri Linguistic Theology: The Future Image of “Koto” Worldview (23) Chapter Three: Watsuji Tetsuro and “Nihongo to tetsugaku no mondai” [4]

It cannot be denied that philosophical “brain-mind” theory is philosophically immature in today’s Tenrikyo theology. Within the function (providence) of the material body, which is a “thing lent” from God, God has given us the free use of the mind, but its functioning—that is, the activity based on recognition and judgment of truth, goodness, beauty, and the sacred, carried out the mind’s cognition/emotion/intent—has not been studied by today’s Tenrikyo theology in conjunction with its related theology of “causality,” “passing away for rebirth,” “soul,” while taking the purview of perspectives drawn from social and scientific inquiries. For example, is the term “heart” (mune) as found in the “Mikagura-uta” verse of “ponder over it from your innermost heart” synonymous with “mind” (kokoro) as found in “Until you determine your own minds” and “The origin of illness lies in your own mind”? If not, what is the rational basis for such claim, taking into account its relation with “soul” (tamashii)? Such questions are not address with thorough theological discussion.

In this article, I will introduce various writings by Hiroshi Ichikawa, Wataru Hiromatsu, and Nathalie Sarthou-Lajus.

Takanori Sato — Creatures That Appear in the “Story of the Origin” (11) In Regard to the “Shachi” and “Shachihoko” [2]

Commoners who lived through the transition from Edo to Meiji period would regard shachi and sachihoko in the image of the shachihoko, as introduced in the Wakan sansai zue. That is, it was an imaginary animal, “with the appearance of a fish with a head of a tiger, its tail would always bend upwards towards the heaven and have sharp fins along its back.” It can be found on the rooftops of castle keeps and temples, as well as on decorative tiles of wealthy merchants. In “Chapter Three: Truth of Origin” of the Tenrikyo Doctrine, Tsukihi God the Parent determined the fish as the male prototype and embedded it within the orc as “instrument of the bones.” This implies that the fish, as sanshou, was embedded in the shachihoko as “instrument of support.”

Koji Fukaya — Milepost Usage of the Ofudesaki (7) Regarding “Muri”

In this article, I will reflect on the term, “muri” (unreasonable/compel). In summary, for human beings to “not know” about God’s innermost heart is “not unreasonable,” but it is also “not unreasonable” for God to have “regret”

over such condition; and it is implied that “to be compelled to come” includes the connotation of “to ask to come without having being taught about God the Parent’s innermost heart.” Also, in regard to Shuji, Oyasama’s eldest son, God the Parent caused him hardship; this hardship is said to be unreasonable. For such reason, it is logical (“not unreasonable”) to have a mind of doubt. But exactly for such reason, it is thought to be reasonable to clarify such mind of doubt.

Jiro Sawai — Reflections on the Words of the Osashizu (13) “Path” in Osashizu, Volume 1, Entries Regarding “Church Headquarters Issues”

In this article, I will examine the uses of “path” as it appears in Divine Directions regarding “Church Headquarter Issues” and distinguish the situations where “path” is used often in comparison to those situations when it is not used at all. In Volume One of the Osashizu, there are 105 passages regarding “Church Headquarters issues.” Among them, there are 55 in which “path” is not used even once. On the other hand, there are 33 in which it appears more than three times. As a result of this study, it becomes clear that the “path” is never used in Divine Directions that concern property purchase or construction by the Church Headquarters, and “path” is used frequently in situations concerning the establishment of Church Headquarters.

Masanobu Yamada — New Religion’s Missions in Brazil (35) Varieties in Salvation: Tenrikyo [5]

Among Protestant believers, there is a strong sense of identity, as if to claim a status of “authentic believer,” and conversion to other religion is rare. In this article, I will examine a case of a woman who converted from Catholicism to Protestantism and, finally, to Tenrikyo upon undergoing a divorce. This woman deviated from two overlapping standards of conformity—the Catholic standard holding marriage as a sacrament and the gender standard—and shouldered a stigma greater than the one placed on her divorced husband. She sought a place of belonging in a Protestant church, but when it demanded her conformity to a dress code, she could not feel comfortable in it. She came to know of Tenrikyo through a friend, and through the missionary’s guidance, she learned ways to self-reflect and to connect with other people.

Kazukuni Watanabe — Paving the Way Towards Local Community Welfare: Creation of a New Culture of Philanthropy (15) Street Collection as a Means of Fundraising [3]

Street collections engender a mutually directed place of communication. Street collection is not simply a training experience to bolster one’s nerves but a face-to-face form of fundraising that connects the general populace to social issues. If that is the case, there is a need to devise one’s activities in ways that take into account the other’s concerns. The important thing is to have street collection function as a “meeting point” that connects the general populace to the involved parties of the street collection, to the underlying issues that drive the activity, and to its issues and actual settings. Moreover, street collection must enable a “moment of sincerity” that elicits satisfaction from the donor (pedestrian). This is an element that is common through all curbside activities.

Hisao Kuwabara — Messages from Ruins (9) Journal of Travels in England [5] Legendary Queen and the Caistor Ruins

In the Caistor ruins, located on the outskirts of Norfolk and Norwich, aerial photographs taken in 1928 revealed that a systematic townscape dating to the Roman era remains within the scattered farmlands. Further archaeological surveys estimated that these were built immediately after the suppression of a large-scale rebellion led by the Queen Boudica of the Iceni tribe against the Roman army in about 60 AD. However, in 2005, William Bowden of the University of Nottingham, who had doubts about this general theory, embarked on a new research project in order to advance the understandings of the ruins. This project also seeks to contribute to the local community, and, taking the shape of a community archaeology, is characterized by the voluntary participation of many people in the local community.

Juri Kaneko — Contemporary Religion and Woman (8) The Birth of a Female Monk

In this article, through the case study of Nishi-hongwanji, I will trace the history of female monks and female chief priests in Japan’s traditional Buddhism. “Female monks” emerged in its order in 1931. The reason for the emergence of female monks has been pointed to the heightening democratic fervor, in the modern era, that gradually appeared in the general populace, exemplified by the movement for universal suffrage. Further, it is said that “post-war democracy” was a necessary prerequisite for the appearance of “female chief priests.” However, while secular laws and social movements became driving factors for the institutionalization of gender equality within the temple organization, there are also hints of the pervasiveness of “ie” (family/clan) consciousness at the “habitual” level.

Mari Hatakama — From the Sankokan Musuem (5) Told By the Arrival of Spring

I will introduce the Jirosemon hina dolls, a part of the museum collection, among the hina dolls of the momo seasonal festivities of March, which is said to announce the arrival of spring. As a traditional doll figure, the hina dolls are thought to have only one pattern; however, it has undergone many transformation over history. This is one particular version of it. In addition, I will answer simple questions such as which is placed to the right or left, the male hina or female hina doll?