

Uzo Takami — Opening Words: “Our Issue/As a Whole”

Happy New Years! In July of last year, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare established “‘Our Issue/As a Whole’ Headquarters to Actualize a Regional Inclusive Society.” It seeks to transcend institutional and field-specific relationships, and thereby allow local citizens and other local agencies to participate as ‘our issue’; thus, it aims for a society that engenders each individual citizen to find a lifestyle and life calling and a joint community by enabling people to connect to other people and other resources not only based on generation and fields but ‘as a whole.’” The backdrop to this initiative is the issue related to limitations of public support systems that are “vertically defined,” providing its assistance in separate categories to the disabled, the elderly, and minors; on the other hand, there were intimate lifestyle issues that were never addressed by public support systems. It is predicted that, in the year 2035, one in five seniors will be afflicted with dementia, and this is something that cannot be dismissed as “someone else’s issue.” In particular, in regard to the direction of the “our issue,” there are emphases on 1) expansion of active organizations that “reflect upon a community where individuals and family would like to live” and 2) increasing active citizens who “seek to find solutions to issues that are found in their own community.” When we read the Instruction Three, we repeated the words, “Salvation work begins with paying attention to those around us. If we find people who are suffering from illnesses or other problems, let us first pray for a solution, speak proactively to them, and reach out to them” and sought to put these words into action. Now, am I the only one that feels that “Our Issue/As a Whole” have begun to overlap with such words.

Mikio Yasui — Short History of Tenrikyo Theology (124) Seizan Manuscripts [15] Transcriptions of Copies of the “Osashizu”

Next, I will examine the copies of the “Osashizu” preserved at Seizan Branch Church, located in Ise City of Mie Prefecture. Seizan Branch Church is a Shidokai affiliate, linked through the Kawaramachi-Koga-Gamo-Seizen lineage. Kin’ai Branch Church, whose transcripts I examined previously, is an affiliate of Koga; thus, there may be transcripts of the “Osashizu” that may overlap. But, in the case of Seizan, there are many instances where two or three Osashizu directions were stitched together with a cover page. Were these stitched together as it was being made? Or, were these stitched together following the model of the master copy? The answer is not clear. Moreover, the dates for the transcriptions are not unknown. To such extent, it may be more possible to date back on the transcripts at Kin’ai. With such issues in mind, I will attempt a reading of these transcripts of the “Osashizu.”

Akio Inoue — A Preliminary Study of Tenri Linguistic Theology: The Future Image of “Koto” Worldview (45) Chapter Six: Takaaki Yoshimoto and *Shiso no ansorogi* [4]

The “Restoration” Movement of the immediate prewar was not only an attempt to restore the scriptures, which were confiscated during the wartime, or to escape from sect Shinto; rather, it was an attempt to autonomously construct a unique Tenrikyo philosophy. There is a call for the system, with unity of mind, to transcend the safety of repeating pro-state doctrine and to lend a fresh impact upon society through a glocal Tenri philosophy. Even if this is too much to expect, there is a need for Tenri “scholar-philosopher” (*fudetori gakunin*), who has awakened to the truth, carrying a firm resolve to transcend the current stagnation. We are in face with an unprecedented age of confusion that unquestionably requires such conviction, and we must see that there is a demand to recognize such condition and to establish a practical philosophy to address it. In my article, I reference and comment upon key sacred words, from the *Ofudesaki* and the *Anecdotes of Oyasama*, and touch upon issues related to translation and cross-cultural migration in regard to the *Ofudesaki*, whose verses are often absent of subject and object terms.

Takayuki Onoue — Varieties of North American Tenrikyo Missions Seen Through the History of Japanese Immigration (13) Prewar Mission in Hawaii and the Japanese-American Immigrant Society [3]

In Hawaii’s Japanese immigrant society during the 1920s and 30s, various groups among Buddhism and Shinto, led by Higashi Honganji, grew in size. Also, new religions such as Konkokyo, Tenrikyo, and Seicho-no-Ie began missionary work. The beginning of World-War Two prompted a halt of their activities, and many of their leaders were incarcerated. In the postwar, various religious organizations worked hard to restore their presence, and other new religious organizations began their missionary activities. Currently, a key issue confronting these religions with Japanese heritage is how to respond to the rapidly pluralizing Hawaiian society and Japanese-American society.

Koji Fukaya — Milepost Usage of the *Ofudesaki* (29) In Regard to Verbs [14]

In Part V, in contrast to a mode of pondering based on quieting the mind and contemplating upon God’s words, as we saw earlier, there is the “purification” of the mind that occurs through a self-realization (made possible by God the Parent’s workings) of one’s mind responding to God the Parent. Also, in Part VII and Part XVI, human mind is said to become “completely purified” through the process of moving forward towards the completion of the Service, or at through the performance, at key times, of the Service.

Jiro Sawai — Reflections on the Words of the *Osashizu* (27) “Timely Directions” and the “Path” in Volume Three of the “Divine Directions”

I will organize the references to “path” as found in Timely Directions

within Volume Three of the *Divine Directions, Revised Edition*. There are 27 instances of the Timely Directions, and “path” appears in 22 of them. Among these it appears more than three times in 13 cases. Also, among the Timely Directions of volume three, there is an annual average of nine cases. In volume one, the annual average was 24, and in volume two, it was 13. Thus, we can see that there is a decreasing number of Timely Directions over the years.

In the Timely Directions of volume one and two, the “path” is contrasted between two types, of “path of God” and of “path of the world.” There is caution to avoid being swept by the “world.” It calls upon the followers to prioritize the “path of God.” In comparison, “path of the world” does not appear in volume three, and there are many cases that teach how “this path” came to be.

Masato Fujiwara — Laïcité and Tenrikyo’s Mission in France (13) The History of Laïcité [10]

The groundbreaking element of the Ferry Laws (1881-1882) was the making of elementary education that was “free, obligatory, and secular” and sought to nurture citizens who could reason in a republican manner. Through this law, the power balance at schools between priests and instructors tilt decisively in favor of republican instructors. In its curriculum, morals not bounded by any specific religion were taught, and the traditional idea that religion lies at the base of social life was rejected. Moral values taught in the moral lessons were not significantly different from those in Catholic teachings, but the pedagogy differed. In contrast to religious worldview that emphasized faith and deemed rational function to be secondary, public education emphasized human being’s autonomous rationality and reason based on science.

The application of this law was pushed forward quietly, but since the Ferry Law, France was to move irreversibly in the direction of laïcité.

Masahiko Okada — “Human Beings” Living in the Contemporary World and “Religion”: A Rethinking (1) Who Am “I”? Human Existence and World of Semantics

Who am “I”?

When human beings are placed in an existential condition in which they cannot answer such a simple yet fundamental question, they are able to relish the freedom in the world rendered possible by such instability, and yet also confront an undeniable anxiety of such existence. This is the reason for which human beings come to require an expansive semantic structure, of which religion is one.

However, the “image=world” in which human beings, who require “meaning” in this contemporary world, posit themselves and the world “naturally,” is increasingly estranged from human being’s actual reality in unprecedented ways, and human are beginning to sense “actual” reality in a world of simulation than in their actual experience. In this world inundated by virtual reality, can “religion” argue for its *raison d’être* that responds to the existential condition of contemporary humans?

In this article, I will introduce a wide range of theories that critically analyzes the contemporary existential condition of human beings, and think about the role and possibilities for religion in contemporary society.

Hisao Kuwabara — Messages from the Ruins (30) In Celebration of Professor Emeritus Hiroshi Kanaseki’s Ninetieth Birthday

Professor Emeritus Hiroshi Kanaseki, who had his ninetieth birthday on November 19, conducted numerous ruin excavations and carried out many scholarly research; he embodied the history of postwar Japanese archaeology. Glancing through *Kokogaku to seishin bunka* (Archaeology and culture of the spirit), a collection of his articles, we can see the process of his continuous reflection and observations, premised on his experience and wide-ranging scholarly knowledge. In particular, during his tenure at Tenri University, through his encounter with religious studies and national literature, he explored the issue of spiritual culture from an archaeological approach, and the multitude of his scholarly reflections on ancient customs and religions remains an unrivalled masterpiece.

Juri Kaneko — Contemporary Religion and Woman (18) History of “Woman Emperors” and Modern Japan

The gender gap index in 2017 dropped Japan to 114th place among 144 countries, which was 3 spots lower than its 2016 ranking. Its lack of progress in the field of politics is particularly pronounced. Is there not a history in Japan in which woman emperors are removed from their place of authority? There was, indeed, a history of “woman emperors” in Japan. However, the Tokugawa shogunate embraced a male-centered power structure that marginalized female authority, and its influence continued beyond the Meiji Restoration. The Great Japanese Empire, which sought a place among civilized nations, implemented a system in which women were thoroughly displaced from the realms of politics.

Yomei Mori — Preliminary Thoughts on African-European Relations as Found in Congolese Society (14) Colonial Rule and Christianity [2]

The accomplishments of Prosper-Philippe Augouard are significant in the history of Christianization of Congo. Born in France and coming to see his priesthood devoted to missions as his calling, he left for Gabon when he was twenty-five. Later, he was active in missionary endeavors in equatorial Africa, centered in Congo. He devoted himself to inculcating Congolese, while confronting their native customs such as polygamy and sorcery. This happened to be where Jule Ferry, who served as prime minister of the Third Republic, was carrying out his colonial expansionism, and the expansion of Christianity developed in tandem with the expansion of the French colonies.