

Uzo Takami — Opening Words: Thinking of Heaven

Tenrikyo is a teaching in which, from up above, the path for salvation was established within the human world, as noted in the words, “I have descended here to save all humankind.” When we reflect that this path was established by God the Parent who overlooked everything from the world of heaven above, our hearts are warmed. As noted in the Ofudesaki, “The high places rule this world, but Heaven is also high. I shall make a distinction between the minds of the high places and the mind of God,” (IV:104) heavenly thinking is something that transcends human wisdom. When human wisdom has come to a dead end, we can only look to the heavens. This is the moment of the beginning of faith. Also, in the Divine Direction given to an inquiry made during the severe interference and persecution from state authorities in 1896, when the Home Ministry’s directory issued, God encouraged our pioneers, saying “The one way is said to be in the heavens, in the heavens” (May 21, 1896). Also, God the Parent states, “no matter how dangerous the place may be, no matter how terrifying it may be, God will hold your hand and lead you through. It is the same as holding the ropes of heaven” (February 11, 1900). We must take care to not lose ourselves, forget greed, and securely hold on to the “ropes of heaven.”

Takanori Sato — Creatures That Appear in the “Story of the Origin” (31) In Regard to the “Great Dragon” [2]

In the eastern hills facing the Nara valley, there are many bamboo forests. Whenever a strong wind blows by, the bamboo trees sway repeatedly in large waves. Its appearances remind one of “a dragon lurking about in the bamboo trees.” Among fire prevention experts, bamboo forests are known as “floral indices” that provides indications of “ground water content levels.” Bamboo tends to prefer a relatively moist soil environment in which water comes seeping out of the ground, or where underground water flows nearby. It has been pointed out that such areas are associated with active faults that trigger earthquakes. Therefore, the presence of bamboo forests is included among the factors indicating the presence of an active fault. Natural disasters are God the Parent’s response to human use of mind that does not accord with God the Parent’s intentions, and with God the Parent acting as a “great dragon,” earthquakes occur when such “misuse of mind” becomes prevalent.

Takayuki Onoue — Varieties of North American Tenrikyo Missions Seen Through the History of Japanese Immigration (20) Prewar Mission in Canada and the Japanese-Canadian Immigrant Society [3]

Tenrikyo mission in Canada, similar to those in America and Hawaii, was directed at Japanese people who had gone there primarily as migrant workers and eventually settled down. Missionary efforts were carried out by missionaries who had migrated to Canada for such purpose or by those who entered the faith in Canada. Among the pioneer missionaries were Kohachi Tokiyasu, Ei Shibata, Man Yasuda, and Toma Kamide, and they engaged in active missionary work despite their strenuous living conditions. Some of them underwent internment during the war and later restored churches in the postwar.

Koji Fukaya — Milepost Usage of the Ofudesaki (36 Final) Ichibe Matsuo and the “Ofudesaki”

If the Ofudesaki is read with specific people in mind, it is a readily understandable series of poems. Ichibe Matsuo is among such people, and he appears frequently in the commentaries. This article will be the final article of the series. There were times when I could hardly read my own writings and I experienced cold

sweats, but I do believe that this was a precious experience that enabled me to engage with the Ofudesaki at least one a month. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for my writing being given space in the publication.

Michihiro Narita — Mission and Translation: In the Space between Reception and Transformation (12) Varieties of “Words” in Early Buddhism [1]

The language in which the Sakyamuni taught was the ancient Magadhan language of the Ganges River delta, which was the area of his missionary work. The Brahmin priest, who preached a social order based on caste system of the Varuna, taught the fire ritual in Sanskrit, which the general populace could hardly understand. In clear contrast, Sakyamuni employed the folk speech of Prakrit, used by the common populace. However, because he employed the folk tongue, when Buddhism began to grow geographically, it was required to shift to other languages when it outgrew the stages of its early years. Buddhism undertook the challenge of such linguistic difference, which could be regarded as its fate, and overcame them in the process of its missionary endeavors.

Yasuo Ouchi — Japanese Language Education and the Overseas Mission (1) During the Beginning of Tenrikyo’s Japanese Language Education [1]

I have summarized the early years of Tenrikyo’s Japanese language education and the process by which Tenri University’s Japanese language program was established. After World War Two, Tenrikyo’s second Shinbashira embarked on visits around the world and, during these occasions, listened intently to the earnest thoughts of the local followers; and towards the aims of the establishing the vertical mission and to gather and nurture successors of the path abroad, he began Tenrikyo’s Japanese language education. However, this was unprecedented, and at the time of the opening, there were many hardships, including issues with housing, issues with instructors tasked with the classes, and issues with facilities. In this chapter, I will briefly summarize these matters.

Hisao Kuwabara — Messages from the Ruins (37) Making Cultural Heritage Meaningful Today [5] Karako/Kagi Ruins Reborn as a Historical Landmark Park

This spring, a historical landmark park opened on the site of the Karako/Kagi Ruins, located in Tawaramoto Town of Nara Prefecture. It aims to validate the ruins historical and cultural values while maintaining its historical landscape and recreating the landscape of the Yayoi era. Furthermore, it aims to establish the locality’s identity while engendering a tourist attraction that connects the park to its adjacent rail station. The park is located along a local highway, and is perfectly tailored to be a landmark. The aim to vitalize the community through the preservation and use of a cultural heritage should enable a mutually stimulating effect.

Yomei Mori—Preliminary Thoughts on African-European Relations as Found in Congolese Society (18) African Resistance

Mabiala Ma Nganga is one of the heroes who resisted colonial rule in Congo. He was born in the region of Pool, where the Lari language is widely used. He belongs to the Bassoudi, which is one of the tribes that make up the Congolese. The Bassoudi lived throughout the southern region of Pool. We do not know the details of Nganga’s early life, but the legacy of his actions and challenges against the colonialists as well as the nature of his death are passed down as legend.