

Chuichi Fukaya — Opening Words: Humans and Computers

Given the plethora of computer technology—such as, a shogi software that bested a former shogi title holder, an IBM supercomputer that beat a quiz champion, and the supercomputer named Kei, which commands a speed of 10.51 quadrillion calculations per second—I believe that it is not impossible for computers to accumulate data at multiple times the speed of the human brain and produce computations ever so quickly. However, the world will not be overrun by computers. The reason for this is that, no matter how advanced the machine may be, it is human beings who create and operate the computer. God the Parent created the world so that human beings can live a Joyous Life. God did not create the world so that machines or other forms of life, besides humans, can live a Joyous Life. Human beings are the *raison d’etat* of this world. Computers are the result of “instruction in wisdom” that human beings received from God the Parent. It is hoped that we can enjoy the fruits of the advances of computer under the recognition that it is to be used to contribute to the Joyous Life of human beings.

Harumichi Fukagawa — Historical Resources of Tenrikyo Overseas Mission (26) Historical Resources of the Manchurian Mission [10]

During Sakae Yoshihara’s first year as missionary in Dalian, the Dalian newspaper repeated articles criticizing Tenrikyo; we can see from historical sources that, as a result, missionary and salvation work was difficult to carry out. When visiting the homes of the sick, the mere mention of Tenrikyo would lead to dismissal. Although having not one follower worthy of mention, Yoshihara was able to join the Manchuria group for their pilgrimage to return to the Jiba for Tenrikyo’s Centennial Anniversary Service, held on November 28, 1932. We do not know how the funds were managed for this trip.

Ichiro Soda — Histories of the Tenrikyo Mission (4) Like a Prairie Fire: Church Growth During the 1890s (Part 2)

It is said that Tenrikyo’s growth during the 1890s was “like a prairie fire.” This growth was largely enabled by the “long-distance mission” of the first-generation faithful who had personally experienced salvation through the faith. The energy of the missionary effort raged like wild fire and resulted in churches being established in all forty-six prefectures, excluding Okinawa, within ten years after the church institution was begun.

In the early years of the 1890s, churches were established for the most part in Kinki areas near Church Headquarters. However, in the later years, particularly in 1894 and 1895, many churches also emerged in Tohoku and Kyushu areas.

Such missionary spirit originated from the energetic atmosphere among the first-generation faithful, who had undergone a faith conversion. In face of opposition and attacks from the outside, they heeded the Divine Directions and, thus invigorated, walked about to save people as they way to repay their gratitude to God. Such were the times in the 1890s.

Kensaburo Matsuda — Regarding “Delving Deep Into the Gap of the Folds” (2) “Into the Gap of the Folds . . .” [2]

“All of us present are of the same mind as You.” Petitjean, the missionary, was overjoyed by the words of the one lady, a *kakure-kirishitan* (hidden Christian). But eventually, he vented his thoughts: “everything is a mess.” This is a result of heretical transformation caused by deviations from the Roman orthodox doctrine. “Himegimi izuko ni orasuka” (Princess, where are you?) narrates this episode of transformation in the form of letters sent to the bishop. In 1866, in the midst of the final great persecution, for unknown reasons, the captured *kirishitan* of Buren Island indulged in a joyful singing of the hymns, “The princess of the land of Belen, where are you? Sing with us.” On the next day, awakening from their stupor, one islander mutters to Petitjean, “Our lord

has ascended to the heavens last night.” Another islander sings while wiping the smear from the side of his mouth, “Take me and eat me. This is my body. All of you, drink from this chalice, for it contains my blood of the convent.” At this moment, Petitjean realizes everything, writing, “That day was exactly the day of the carnival according to our Christian calendar. No, I cannot continue. Oh, God.” However, this episode as an unfolding of the heretical transformation is the proof of the unadulterated truth of the “same,” as found in the words of that lady.

Midori Horiuchi — Connecting “Life”: The Phenomenon of Life and Death (4) How Can We Come to Terms with Death [2]

While in United States, Hideo Kishimoto, religion scholar and professor at Tokyo University, was diagnosed with cancer and, given half year to live, underwent surgery. Later, the cancer reappeared and he spent the next ten years battling the sickness. During that time, he was very active in his work, and reflecting upon his own death, constructed his perspective on life and death. This led to the publication of *Shi o mitsumeru kokoro* (The mind that stares at death). In it, Kishimoto writes that death becomes a crisis for human beings because it is the end of life. This is because human beings have an intense desire for life, something that they are not usually aware of. For Kishimoto, who did not believe in an existence after death, the point of departure was to place importance on the reality of life at the present; he comes to realize death as a “time of parting” from life. And, he comes to note that if the abstract conception of life and death is not of any use for him as he confronts death, then, it is a useless tool. And, he divides his theory of life and death into four parts and examines each one.

Hideo Yamaguchi — A Dialogue Among Religions for World Peace (31) Manifestation of Internal Conflict in the Vatican

From late November of last year, a rumor erupted that “the current Pope doesn’t have much to live, and will probably die within the year 2012.” It is hard to tell if this death refers to a natural one or hints of an assassination. The very fact of such rumor relates to issues surrounding the process of choosing the next pope. The current pope is German. The previous pope was Polish. In the long history of the church spanning 265 popes, there have been very few non-Italian popes. Yet, there have been two non-Italian foreigners who have become pope in consecutive terms. Therefore, there are many Italians among the cardinals who wish to become the next pope. Of course, no cardinal will declare his wishes to become the next pope. Recently, discussions within the Vatican have been leaked to the outside press in order to make use of the media.

Saburo Yagi — The Path Towards Normalization (2) The Definition of “the Disabled” and Its Reality

The international definition of the disabled was instituted in the “International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps,” adopted by the United Nations in 1980. Three concepts—of “impairment” defined on a medical level, “disability” defined on the lifestyle level, and “handicap” defined on a social integration level—formed the definition of disability. In May of 2000, it was changed to “International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health,” to take account of the positive aspects of the experience of disability.

In Japan, there are roughly 7,443,000 people with disabilities. This is 6% of the general population. According to the current definition of the disabled, there are not only the people burdened with considerable hardships in their daily and social lives but also people who suffer various issues in their daily lives due to chronic ailments, and when these people are taken into account, the number of disabled people grows considerably. With the progressive aging of our country in recent years, if we are to take into account the families of the disabled, then, the issue of “disability” extends beyond a limited portion of the population but to a significant number of people in a very personal way.