

Chuichi Fukaya — Opening Words: In Regard to Same-Sex Marriage (1)

At a Study Seminar held at the Mission Headquarters in America, I was asked by several participants as to “how to approach the issue of same-sex marriage.” This is an issue that is no longer limited to a few eccentric people in the Bay Area but a matter that affects head ministers in various parts of America. When we reflect upon same-sex marriage, the first issue will concern our perspective and stance. That is, from the first person perspective, this is a matter that concerns oneself; from the second person perspective, this is a concern that relates to family or a close acquaintance; and the third person perspective allows a detached, objective view. We need to pay attention to the way in which the choice of perspective leads to vastly different views. For example, those who may say that “allowing same-sex perspective will lead to the demise of any descendents and thus to the extinction of the human race” may need to alter their thought process if their own child comes out (makes confession as a same-sex person) from one concerned about the human race to an individual issue of real people and their lives. A first person perspective on same-sex marriage is nothing more than differences in personal choice. In comparison, the responses of the world and the religious world are varied. Our religion is now faced with demands for an opinion in regard to same-sex marriage.

Mikio Yasui — Short History of Tenrikyo Theology (86) Kin'ai Manuscripts [7]

These transcriptions of the Divine Directions did not reference the original version preserved at the Jiba. It is worth noting with caution that these were conveyed to the transcriber through various routes and in various mediums. Also, among them, there are many instances of copying errors and omissions. It is important to examine these transcriptions while keeping these issues in mind. What these transcripts provide is a window into how the faith was conveyed to distant areas.

Chuichi Fukaya — Deep Reflections on the Life of Oyasama (5) Shrine of Tsukihii

Miki Nakayama, who became Oyasama, may not have differed from others in Her appearance, but Her use of mind was no longer that of Miki Nakayama as a human being but rather in a state where “only the mind of God Parent shall appear.” However, Miki Nakayama did not, in fact, become God the Parent itself. The soul and body of Miki Nakayama as a human being was still in existence. She would feel hot and cold weathers just like any other humans. She did not become an existence set apart from humans, but under the same conditions of heat or cold, She would demonstrate the “Path of the Divine Model” that human beings ought to undergo.

That is, this is not a path that only God, unscathed by either heat or cold, could undertake; this is a path that human beings in flesh could undergo. Oyasama took the lead to walk the path that human beings must undertake. Oyasama experienced in the same way the heat and the cold and the various sufferings of the human mind, and on top of that, demonstrated the path that would realize God the Parent's intentions for us. That is the reason why we human beings can follow this Divine Model.

For example, if there is a plant whose leaves were in perfect symmetrical balance and with no trace of bugs or dead leaves, everyone will assume that it was not a living tree. Living plants all have uneven leaves and dead leaves or broken branches are hanging loose somewhere. Genuine things, in nature, are genuine precisely because they have something that is imperfect. That is, Oyasama's Divine Model is genuine precisely because it contains something imperfect as a human being, with its anxieties and sufferings. The Divine Model is not a super-human perfection but rather a complete Divine Model because contains the imperfections of human beings.

Ichiro Soda — Histories of the Tenrikyo Mission (35) Extra Tidbit 2: Church Founders Who Were Prominent Figures, Scholars, or Believers in Other Religions

Among people who founded churches, there were people who possessed different backgrounds and status from the general populace. Some were prominent figures in their community, such as wealthy property owners, rich farmers, and large land owners. Also, there were scholars, intellectuals, and those who were devoted to other religions.

It is quite interesting as to the influence that these people had

upon others around them when they took up the Tenrikyo faith and founded their respective churches. The history of the mission tells us that these people held large sway over others around them, and were instrumental in spreading the faith.

For example, among the early followers of the Nikko lineage in the Tochigi and Ibaragi Prefectures, there were wealthy property owners, rich farmers, and large land owners. When these people entered the faith, many others followed. Also, Tomokichi Kashiwara, the founder of Myodo Grand Church, was a Shingon practitioner while Kinnosuke Konishi of Rokugo Branch Church was a devout follower of divination. I believe that when those who were interested in religion are exposed to a genuine religion such as Tenrikyo, they take on a missionary fervor. This is the legacy found in the history of the Tenrikyo mission.

Akio Inoue — A Preliminary Study of Tenri Linguistic Theology: The Future Image of “Koto” Worldview (7) A Semantic Theory of “Mono” and “Koto” [5]

Harutsugu Yamaura, a doctor who served in the Kisen region of Iwate Prefecture, which was badly damaged by the Northeast Japan Earthquake, studied the ancient Greek scriptures on his own and completed a Kesen-dialect translation of the Bible. In *Iesu no kotoba: Kesen go yaku* (Words of Jesus: A Kesen translation, published by Bunshun shinsho 2011), he concludes with “an attempt at new translated terms for the Bible” in which he lists forty translated phrases from the old version and the new translation; and as a way to demonstrate the evocative qualities of the new translation, I want to point out several of these terms. Incidentally, all of these vocabulary terms are explained in detail in the main body of the book. To love is “to take care.” Life is “to live in happiness and with vitality; also, its source of energy.” To pray is “to listen with one's spiritual ears to the voices of God.” God's land is “the place where God reigns.” Christ is translated as “otasuke-sama” (the one who saves). To repent is “to transform one's mind completely.” Faith is “to rely wholly upon God; to trust.” Savior is “otasuke-sama.” John the Baptist is “John who submerges in water.” To approach is “to have, here and now.” Gospel is “good tidings.” Resurrection is “to stand once again.” Messiah is “otasuke-sama.” Prophecy is “story-telling.” I am the path is “I will lead people to true happiness.” These are the Japanese translation of ancient Greek terms taking the Kisen dialect as a foundation.

Koji Fukaya — A Growth of Faith through Ofudesaki (31) Part V:1-32

The phrase “oxen or horses” (V:1) is a distinctive expression in the Ofudesaki. According to the Notes, it is used, as generally preached at the time, to express those who are not thankful for others, rather than to indicate a relation between human beings and oxen or horses. That is to say, the phrase shows that God the Parent hopes everyone is a “human being” who follows a way to repay the favor.

Also, “lean on” (V:9) means to shift one's weight from oneself to others. In addition to that physical movement, the figure of being on one's back shows a faith in what cannot be seen. That is to say, what matters in the word of “lean on” is the center, not only physically but also mentally. Ofudesaki teaches us that we should trust our physical and mental center to God when we suffer from a disease.

Masanobu Yamada — New Religion's Missions in Brazil (19) Organizational Development of Japan's New Religions [3]

In Brazil, the Tenrikyo churches are concentrated on the southeastern part of the country, where many people of Japanese descent live. And yet, there are also eight churches in the northern and northeast regions where very few Japanese immigrants live. In this article, I will introduce the life history of two missionaries who founded the Tenrikyo Nordeste Church and its affiliated church, located in the city of Recife in the state of Pernambuco. Both churches have drawn attention from the Tenrikyo diocese in Brazil because, since its founding, these two churches have constantly increased its membership. Moreover, the percentage of non-Japanese followers is high. There are followers each year for the spiritual development course held at the Mission Headquarters, and the churches also send its followers at a rate of once every other year to the Lay Minister Qualification Course held at the Jiba. In comparison to Perfect Liberty and Seicho no Ie, which operate missions in the same town, the Tenrikyo mission is based on individual initiative and cannot be

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characterized as structured or designed. The method of missionary work is through individual effort carried out while also earning a living, and we can see that the “individual missionary” style carried out in Japan is being practiced here as well.

Midori Horiuchi — Connecting “Life”: The Phenomenon of Life and Death (35) On “Life” [6]

Death will call upon all person born. Even those who yearned for immortality will eventually die. Religion has provided “meaning” to the life and death of those people. These are life and rebirth, or reincarnation, the afterlife or the next life, and the final judgment. These, in other words, present a model to live this life and provide salvation for people. I will introduce the Book of the Dead that existed in Tibet and in Egypt, and confirm as to how these manuscripts served as guidebooks for the dead in their journey to the world of afterlife.

Saburo Yagi — The Path Towards Normalization (32) In Their Own Voice (Danmark)

I interviewed three wheelchair users as to their use of the parking spaces for the disabled. When they encounter fraudulent use, their response is to notify the police. Also, when applying for a driver’s license, an explanation is provided in regard to the proper use of the parking spaces for the disabled.

When I asked if the disabled themselves are involved in the efforts to ensure proper use, they noted that they belong to organizations for the disabled. Among them, one organization is actively involved. Henrik Jensen’s PTU (a polio association) carries out activities where posters are placed on cars violating the use of disability parking. The poster includes a sardonic statement, that “if you plan to take our parking spaces for the disabled, we ask that you also take away our disabilities as well.”

Surveys clarified that there were differences in the system itself, but I believe that such awareness campaigns can be effective tools to address violations of the parking space usage.

Jiro Sawai — Great East Japan Earthquake and Religion (5) Clinical Religionist

In April of the year following the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Faculty of Arts and Letters in the Tohoku University Graduate School established a “practical religious studies endowed lectureship.” This was not established through donations received by the school nor does it engage in “spiritual counseling.” However, this can be regarded as an extension of such activities, and is the very first lectureship devoted to practice of religion established in Japan in a public university. This lectureship aims to nurture “clinical religionists” as a Japanese version of chaplains, and holds clinical religious sessions intended for religionists of wide-ranging religions and denominations. This vision which began in the aftermath of the earthquake and disaster is slowly spreading to areas throughout Japan.

Norihito Nakao — Han Resources in Tenri University Sankokan Museum Collection (11) Folk Prints [3]

In this article, I will introduce the remaining ten categories of Chinese folk prints.

Shenxiangtu (drawings of deities): object of worship. At New Years, *shenxiangtu* are hung at altars and offerings placed. At the early hours of the new year, the entire family assembles to welcome the deity of the new year and to pay respects. *Shenxiangtu* are placed at predetermined places in the house, and the master of the house together with family pay respects.

Zhiba (paper horses): At events such as New Years, spring memorial holiday, Boy’s celebration holiday, and mid-year memorial holiday, a *zhiba* appropriate to each occasion is placed on the altar to welcome the deities. Also, *zhiba* is placed on the altar at funerals and weddings. At other times as well, there are *zhiba* appropriate to the needs of the quotidian life of the common people.

Nianhua (calendar drawing): the depictions on the drawings often include auspicious materials. Other than that, there are many depictions of plays and scenes from a story. These also serve as interior decorations, to be viewed and enjoyed.

In addition to these three categories, there are also the following seven: *chuanghua* (window drawing), *denghua* (lantern drawing), *fanhua* (cloth drawing), *chatu* (insert drawing), *yinji* (stamp notes), and *youyi* (playful art).

天理教スタディーセミナー開催

深谷 忠一

アメリカ伝道庁主催（後援：海外部、おやさと研究所）のTENRIKYO STUDY SEMINAR 2014 が、8月30日～9月1日の日程で伝道庁を会場に開催され、永尾比奈夫海外部翻訳課長、梶本満男海外部北米・オセアニア課長、そして、筆者（おやさと研究所長）の3名が講師として出講した。

このSTUDY SEMINAR開催の目的は、「To provide an opportunity for future lecturer candidates to deepen their understandings of the teachings of Tenrikyo in English」というもので、アメリカ伝道庁管内の主事、教会長、教会長後継者、布教所長、管内拠点長など21名が、アメリカ・カナダの各地からロサンゼルスに集合して、英語での教理の研鑽に集中する3日間を持った。

今回のセミナーのメインテーマは“元の理”で、初日は筆者が、

- ① Why was the Truth of Origin taught?
- ② The material used to compile the Truth of Origin
- ③ How to read the Truth of Origin
- ④ Subjects taught in the Chapter 3 of The Doctrine

と題して、“元の理”の概説を行い、その後講義内容についての質疑応答。また、小グループに分かれてのディスカッションの時間が持たれた。

第2日目の午前中には、永尾課長が、

- ① Exploring the Truth of Origin according to the Ofudesaki
と題して、おふでさきに書かれている元の理の解説、また、
- ② General Observation of Yamazawa's poetic version
という、こうき本についての解説をして、その後その講義についての質疑応答を行った。

そして、午後には、梶本課長が司会・進行を担当して、Discussion "Truth of Origin" and Service I&IIの時間が持たれた。

第3日目は、

Discussion on Tenrikyo in General

ということで、セミナー参加申込時に提出された各種の質問に対して、講師陣からの解答及び受講者間での意見交換が行われた。

今回のセミナーは、開講目的と受講対象者を明確にして計画され、講師陣もその準備に1年以上を費やして望んだ結果、受講者からは、

- The level and sophistication of this seminar & participants was very high.
- It was enlightening to learn so much more about a topic that was so important to our faith that we might not think about very often.
- I felt uneasy with this topic of the Truth of Origin but after this seminar, I feel I have a better foundation of the Tenrikyo teachings.

というような感想がよせられた。