A BRIEF GUIDE TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE MATERIALS ON JAPAN’S RELIGIONS

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Though a thorough knowledge of Japanese religions will always require the reading of primary sources, there now exist a number of books and articles in English, not to mention other Western languages, which make available to the foreign reader sufficient material to acquire a basic understanding of religious life in Japan.

The contributions made to the study of Japanese religions by such pioneers as William G. Aston, Ernest M. Satow, Basil H. Chamberlain, Karl Florenz, Sir Charles Eliot and others cannot be ignored even today. In consequence of their initiative people in the West began to study Japanese scholars, some of whom are still remembered abroad because a few of their works were written in or translated into a foreign language. Mention may be made of Anesaki Masaharu (Science of Religion), Takakusu Junjirō, and Nanjō Bunyū (Buddhist Studies), Kato Genchi (Shinto Studies), and Yanagita Kunio (Folklore Studies). Many of their works are now dated, however, and it may also be said that while they have attracted Western attention to some aspects of Japanese religious life, they have left others untouched.

After a period of virtual inaccessibility to things Japanese in
Guide to Japanese Religions

the years preceding World War II, the reopening of Japan in 1945 gave new impetus to Japanese studies by Western scholars. Concretely, this renewed interest has resulted in a spate of books and articles presenting, in combination, a wide spectrum of information and interpretation relative to religious traditions and forms of behavior in Japan. The present guide is concerned primarily with these comparatively recent contributions and will be limited to books and monographs. Periodicals will be mentioned but periodical articles cannot be taken into account here.


PERIODICALS

For information regarding Japan’s religions, especially with reference to contemporary scholarly and religious concerns, periodicals dealing explicitly with this subject are indispensable. Best known are Contemporary Religions in Japan, published by the International Institute for the Study of Religions (c/o Sophia University, 7 Kioi-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102) and Japanese Religions, issued by the National Christian Council Center for the Study of Japanese Religions (c/o Kyoto Diocese of the Japan
Anglican Episcopal Church, Karasuma Shimo Tachiuri, Kami-gyō-ku, Kyoto 602). Also to be mentioned are the *Eastern Buddhist*, published by the Eastern Buddhist Society (Ōtani University, Koyama, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603) and the *Tenri Journal of Religion*, issued by the Oyasato Research Institute of Tenri University (Tenri-shi, Nara-ken 632).

Histories and General Works


From the angle of sociology, psychology, and anthropology, a number of useful studies have appeared. Those of a general or background nature from the perspective of the study of reli-

The field of religious concerns as expressed in Japanese literature is too broad to go into here, but mention should be made of *The Manyōshū* (1965; New York and London: Columbia University Press, [first published in 1940]) and the two volumes compiled by Donald Keene (ed.), *Anthology of Japanese Literature from the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (1955) and *Modern Japanese Literature* (1956), both published by the Charles E. Tuttle Company of Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo. Two works of
fiction by a contemporary Catholic, **Endō Shusaku**, both dealing with the introduction of Christianity, have aroused considerable interest in Japan. One is the novel *Silence*, translated by William Johnston (1969; Tokyo: Sophia University in cooperation with the Charles E. Tuttle Company) and the play *Golden Country*, translated by Francis Mathy (1970; Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company).

A document of primary importance for understanding the guiding principles of the Meiji period is the long out-of-print *Kokutai no Hongi*, translated by John O. Gauntlett and edited by Robert K. Hall (1949; Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

Turning from background materials to studies concerned specifically with Japanese religious life, we may begin with the general history, first printed in 1930 but still useful, by Anesaki Masaharu, *History of Japanese Religion* (1963; Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company). The most complete and up-to-date account of the various roles played by different religious systems, including folk religion, in the course of Japanese history is to be found in Joseph M. Kitagawa, *Religion in Japanese History* (1966; New York: Columbia University Press). A more concise, unified interpretation may be found in the already cited work of H. Byron Earhart, *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity*.

Johannes Swyngedouw


SHINTO

Omitting the older but still informative studies of W. G. Ast­
on and Kato Genchi, English readers interested in Shintō would
do well to acquaint themselves with the helpful booklets publish­
ed by the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics at Kokuga­
kuin University, Tokyo, booklets such as An Outline of Shinto
Teachings (1958) and Basic Terms of Shinto (1958), both compiled
by the Shinto Committee for the IXth International Congress
for the History of Religions. Equally informative are Ono
Sokyō Shinto: The Kami Way (1962; Tokyo: Bridgeway Press,
[first published in 1959 as Bulletin No. 8 of the International
Institute for the Study of Religions under the title The Kami
Way]), and Hirai Naofusa, Understanding Japan: Japanese Shinto
1966; Tokyo: International Society for Educational Information,
Inc. [Bulletin No. 18],). Further date on Shinto thought
and Japanese culture are provided in Muraoka Tsunetsugu,
Studies in Shinto Thought, translated by Delmer M. Brown and
James T. Araki (1964; Tokyo: Ministry of Education), and the
enlightening study of the Shinto restorationist Motoori Norina­
ga (1730-1801) by Matsumoto Shigeru (1970; Cambridge:
Harvard University Press).

Books on Shinto by foreign scholars include the study of State
Shinto by D. C. Holtom, Mlodern Japan and Shinto Nationalism,
[first published in 1943]), and the study of the Shinto-related
moral precepts taught in the Japanese educational system from
about 1900 to 1945 in Robert K. Hall, Shushin-The Ethics of a
Defeated Nation (1949; New York: Bureau of Publications, Tea­
chers College, Columbia University). Recently Floyd H. Ross

Among translations of Japanese myths, the monumental work by Donald L. Philippi, *Kojiki* (1968; Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press), should be in the library of any serious student of Japanese religion. Its companion, the *Nihongi*, is still available in only the old but generally reliable translation of W. G. Aston (first published in 1896, reprinted in 1956 in London by George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.).

Another major translation achievement is the *Engi-Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era, Books I-V* by Felicia Gresset Bock (1970; Tokyo: Sophia University), the English presentation representing the first half of the code of Shinto ritual promulgated in 927. The second half, *Books VI-X*, are expected to appear before long. *Book VIII*, containing the classic Shinto prayers, was earlier translated by Donald L. Philippi as *Norito: A New Translation of the Ancient Japanese Ritual Prayers* (1959; Tokyo: Kokugakuin University) but was soon out of print. Still another important work is the *Izumo Fudoki*, translated by Michiko
Yamaguchi Aoki (1971; Tokyo: Sophia University), an eighth century account of Japanese daily life, legends, and religious customs in the ancient province of Izumo.

**Buddhism**


With reference to specific schools of Japanese Buddhism, studies on Zen are numerically predominant. The foremost scholarly advocate has been the late spokesman for Rinzai Zen, Suzuki Daisetsu, of whose many works mention may be made of *Zen and Japanese Culture* (1959; New York: Pantheon Books) and *Essentials of Zen Buddhism* (1963; London and New York: Rider). Not having such a spokesman, Sōtō Zen has existed under a shadow as far as English writings are concerned, but a good if popular presentation can be found in Masunaga Reiho, *The Soto Approach to Zen* (1958; Tokyo: Layman Buddhist Society Press). The best available work by a foreign scholar is Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, translated by Paul Peachey (1963; New York: Pantheon Books).

As for other Buddhist schools, Anesaki Masaharu, *Nichiren the Buddhist Prophet* (1916; Cambridge: Harvard University Press) remains the standard work on this controversial figure.
The two best-known personalities in Pure Land Buddhism, Hōnen and Shinran, have been treated in Shunjo's old but important work *Honen the Buddhist Saint*, translated by Harper H. Coates and Ishizuka Ryugaku (1925; Kyoto: Chion'in), and in the more recent study by Alfred Bloom, *Shinran's Gospel of Pure Grace* (1965; Tucson: University of Arizona Press).

A rather unusual study is Masutani Fumio, *A Comparative Study of Buddhism and Christianity* (1957; Tokyo: Young East Association), a presentation of some aspects of Buddhist faith and practice, primarily from the Jōdo Shinshu perspective, relating these aspects to Christianity, essentially the idea of Christianity found in Renan.

For works on contemporary Buddhism in Japan, reference may be made to the appropriate sections in the general works mentioned above and also to the writings on new religious movements introduced below.

**Christianity**

The circumstance that Christianity in Japan has been studied for the most part by Christian missionaries accounts for the fact that writings in this field are frequently apologetic or evangelistic in character.

Johannes Swyngedouw


A brief but helpful account of the form of Christianity known as Mukyōkai (NonChurch Movement) is Raymond P. Jennings,
Guide to Japanese Religions


Somewhat unusual in that while written from a Christian perspective they attempt to see Christianity in relation to other Japanese religions are two works: one is the rather conservative *Japanese Buddhism and Christianity: A Comparison of the Christian Doctrine of Salvation with that of some major sects of Japanese Buddhism* (1957; Tokyo: Shinkyo Shuppansha) by Tucker N. Callaway, the other a sympathetic study by Raymond J. Hammer entitled *Japan’s Religious Ferment: Christian Presence Amid Faiths Old and New* (1962; London: SCM Press).

**New Religious Movements**

No aspect of Japan’s religious development has been more eagerly studied by Japanese and Western scholars alike than the phenomenon of the so-called new religions. More than eight hundred titles of books and articles on this subject have been collected by H. Byron Earhart in his *The New Religions of Japan: A Bibliography of Western-Language Materials* (1970; Tokyo: Sophia University), his book also containing an introductory chapter that defines the new religious movements and locates them in the context of Japan’s religious history.

Many new religious organizations have introduced their doctrines and emphases to foreign readers through works written by denominational personnel and often published by the sect's own press. Notably productive in this way are Tenrikyō, Sōka Gakkai, and Risshō Kōsei Kai—though other groups too are active in this field. Readers desirous of more information about such publications may correspond directly with the group or groups in which they are interested, utilizing the names and addresses supplied in Part II of this book. As for publications by people who are not members of the sect about which they write, reference may be made to Delwin B. Schneider, *Konkōkyō* (1962; Tokyo: International Institute for the Study of Religions), Charles W. Hepner, *The Kurozumi Sect of Shinto* (1935; Tokyo: Meiji Japan Society), and Henry van Straelen's study of Tenrikyō *The Religion of Divine Wisdom* (1957; Kyoto: Veritas Shion).

Guide to Japanese Religions

Press). To these titles should perhaps be added the controversial best seller by Fujiwara Hirotatsu, *I Denounce Soka Gakkai*, translated by Worth C. Grant (1970; Tokyo: Nisshin Hōdō). Information on other sects may be found in the sections devoted to the new religious movements in the general works previously cited.

Confucianism

In contrast to the comparative abundance of books on other religious traditions in Japan, Confucianism remains virtually untouched by Western scholars. This neglect may be due in part to the unsettled state of the question as to the religious character of Confucianism, in part to the fact that Confucianism in Japan never took the form of an explicitly religious organization. Its influence on Japanese life, including the religious life, is indubitable, however, and it is surprising that there are so few to enter this field. One major study brought to completion some years ago is *Confucianism in Modern Japan: A Study of Conservation in Japanese Intellectual History* (1959; Tokyo: Hokuseidō Press) by Warren W. Smith, Jr. Books written on specific people would include Kaizuka Shigeki, *Confucius*, translated by Geoffrey Bownas (1956; London: Gorge Allen and Unwin, Ltd.), and the study Ito Jinsai: *A Philosopher, Educator and Sinologist of the Tokugawa Period* (1967; New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., [first published in 1948 by the Catholic University in Peking]) by Joseph J. Spae, the latter including a brief history of Japanese Confucianism.

Two briefer studies appear in David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright (eds.), *Confucianism in Action* (1959; Stanford: Stan-
ford University Press). "The Confucian Teacher in Tokugawa Japan" by John Whitney HAL L traces the various roles played by teachers of Confucian principles and the gradual disintegration of these roles with the approach of the Meiji period; "Motoda Eifu: Confucian Lecturer to the Meiji Emperor" by Donald H. SH IVELY describes the personality, views, and influence of the Emperor's Neo-Confucian tutor and guide.

FOLK RELIGION


A more specialized study is H. Byron Earhart, A Religious
Guide to Japanese Religions