

SECOND NANZAN SEMINAR FOR THE STUDY OF JAPANESE RELIGIONS

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The following is a resume of the papers and discussions at an international conference focused on presentations by young advanced Ph.D. students from abroad. The presentations and discussions were all conducted in Japanese. In addition to the speakers, about twenty-five local scholars and students of religion were in attendance.

THE SECOND “Nanzan Seminar for the Study of Japanese Religions” was held at the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture on the weekend of 30–31 May 2015. Five graduate students from the United States and Canada—along with five Japanese commentators, the Nanzan Institute staff, and numerous scholars of religion, both local and international—gathered to present and discuss their research on Japanese religions. The seminar was conducted completely in Japanese.

The Seminar began with a opening remarks by Michael Calmano (President, Nanzan University) and Okuyama Michiaki (Director, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture), both of whom commented on the success of the first “Nanzan Seminar” in 2013 and expressed hope that the second Seminar would be just as productive and intellectually stimulating.

Presenters

Eric Swanson (Harvard University). “The Subjugation of Original Hindrance in Esoteric Buddhist Ritual: Myōō and the function of subjugation in the writings of Godaiin Annen.”

Luke Thompson (Columbia University). “Bringing Śākyamuni to Japan: The Japanese Reception of the *Hikekyō* and the Medieval Fabrication of Myth.”

Paride Stortini (University of Chicago). “East and West of the Tsukiji Honganji.”

Justin Stein (University of Toronto). “Usui Reiki *Ryōhō*, Reiki, and the Discursive Space of Spiritual Healing in Twentieth-Century Japan.”

Kyle Peters (University of Chicago). “Producing the Self-Itself.”

Commentators

Five Japanese scholars representing various fields of research in Japanese religions (modern Buddhism, religious history, classical Japanese literature and religion, religion and gender, New Religious Movements, and others) were invited to provide comments and advice to the presenters:

Abe Yoshirō (Nagoya University)

Kobayashi Naoko (Aichi Gakuin University)

Ōtani Eiichi (Bukkyō University)

Yoshida Kazuhiko (Nagoya City University)

Yoshinaga Shin’ichi (Maizuru National College of Technology)

Advice for the commentators

Following the introductions of the presenters and the discussants, Okuyama asked the discussants to briefly describe their current research interests and give general advice and direction to the young scholars.

The first to respond was Ōtani Eiichi (Bukkyō University), who introduced himself as a sociologist of religion, and stated that his most recent research concerns the Buddhist socialist movement of 1930–1950s and the relationship between Nichirenism and Buddhist socialism in modern Japan (particularly, the works of Tanaka Chigaku and Anagarika Dharmapala in comparative perspective). He also indicated that his interests in the history of modern Buddhism include China and the Korean Peninsula and he is hoping to start a new comparative research project, exploring the relationship between Buddhism and modernity across Asia. Among his other recent research endeavors was a Japanese government Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Project “Buddhism and Media in the Meiji Period.” With the help of thirty Buddhist scholars, Ōtani was able to create a database of the tables of contents of thirty Buddhist and Shinto academic journals of the Meiji period. At the moment there are some nine hundred Buddhist and Shinto academic journals of the Meiji period which need to be catalogued, but Ōtani’s team was able to create an archive for a



selected number of journals, and he expressed hope to finalize this project in the future.

Ōtani also revealed his interests in religious peace movements in Japan, including Christian, Buddhist, and New Religion peace movements ranging from 1945 till the present. His particular research interests include transnational peace movements such as collaborative efforts of Japanese and Chinese Buddhist peace groups during the World War II; American religious peace movements related to the Korean War, and so forth. Ōtani expressed hope to collect and analyze data on the history of transnational religious peace movements in the near future.

Ōtani's advice to the young scholars was expressed as a number of requests: the first was to make an effort to discover original texts and to pay attention to the newly discovered original texts, archives, and historical documents. For example, Yoshinaga Shin'ichi recently discovered some original Buddhist texts of the Meiji-Taisho periods (Pure land Buddhism and Theosophy texts) in one of the Buddhist temples in Osaka. These original texts have never been seen by the academic community. Ōtani suggested that such unearthed original documents may be still hiding in the archives, temples and shrines not only in Japan but in China, Korea, the US and other countries of the world. He encouraged young scholars to go on a "treasure hunting" mission in their research and look for original documents at any opportunity.

Secondly, Ōtani spoke on the significance of international collaboration. Drawing on his experience with international conferences and symposia, Ōtani shared his observations that scholars of Japanese Buddhism from various countries often have very different perspectives on the exact same time periods and historical events. In his experience, scholars of Modern Buddhism from Europe, USA, and Asia may apply totally different ways of problem setting and framework development to the same historical phenomena. Ōtani encouraged young scholars to make special efforts to share their research internationally and expand their academic networks by actively participating in international conferences, symposia, and other global research activities. "We need to create a network of *researchers*, not simply a network of research. We need to achieve globalization of *researchers*, not only globalization of research. We need to build a positive international research environment which will reflect the diversity of perspectives and solicit intense interchange of ideas," he concluded.

Yoshinaga Shin'ichi (Maizuru National College of Technology) introduced himself primarily as a scholar of modern Buddhism of many years whose recent interests lie in the field of religion and spiritual healing. He is particularly concerned with religious concepts of mind-body cultivating, mental training, and the discipline of mind. How does a human body manage to maintain health? How do mindset and behavior influence a body? Yoshinaga currently col-



laborates with a number of religious groups in Japan which practice spiritual healing (not limited to reiki healing). With the blessing of these religious groups he received an access to a variety of valuable documents and he is currently conducting data collection and analysis on spiritual healing practices in Japan.

As a piece of advice to young scholars, Yoshinaga prompted them to cultivate intellectual curiosity and mental agility. He emphasized the importance of the ability to shift research direction on the way. “Ask yourself: what is there around the corner? What kind of new landscape will appear if I take

another turn?” According to Yoshinaga, this kind of ability to shift gears and find new angles time and again can greatly enhance one’s research.

Kobayashi Naoko (Aichi Gakuin University) defined mountain worship as her main research specialization. Mountain worship is a kind of pantheistic/animistic nature worship and her particular interests lie in religious practices at Mount Ontake (Kiso Ontake). She conducted cultural anthropological and ethnographic fieldwork among mountain worship communities for her doctoral dissertation and she continues this research project. Kobayashi is particularly fascinated by mountain pilgrims and their connection with nature: their sense of danger (animal attacks, getting lost, solitude, natural disasters), their understanding of emotional pain and spiritual healing through nature, magical and medical powers, and so forth.

Kobayashi is currently involved in several other anthropological, ethnographic and gender research projects unrelated to religion. She pointed out that hands-on fieldwork projects – even if not directly related to religious studies – may be a good practice to a scholar of religion. She encouraged young scholars to broaden their perspectives and participate in a variety of anthropological projects. “In our day and age, we can find countless books on every possible subject—you name it. Research becomes highly theoretical. Unfortunately, many scholars underestimate the importance of participant observation but I find it extremely helpful to



physically go to local areas and participate in the lives of local religious communities,” Kobayashi said. She shared that as part of her research on mountain worship she climbed Kiso Ontake several times and participated in magical *kamioroshi* festive rituals (invoking of spirits and deities). This experience radically changed her perspective. “No matter how much theoretical knowledge you can acquire from reading, I encourage you to have very real practical experiences with your research subjects,” she concluded.



Yoshida Kazuhiko (Nagoya City University) introduced himself as a scholar of ancient Japanese history and Japanese Buddhist history. The range of his interests is very broad—he examines ancient Buddhist texts in search of the origins of the Japanese nation-state, and he also looks at modern Buddhist texts critically, through the prism of the post-modern reinterpretation of traditional values. He asks challenging questions about the role of Buddhism in the formation of the Japanese national identity, and he also raises concerns about gender issues and women’s roles in the context of Japanese Buddhism. Yoshida shared with the participants the evolution of his views on the fields of ancient Japanese history and Japanese Buddhist history. “I used to wear ‘Japanese history and Buddhist history’ as a badge of honor but I have gradually come to doubt the legitimacy—even the very existence—of these academic fields. Based on *The Chronicles of Japan (Nihon shoki)* until recently we identified Nara Buddhism as “State Buddhism” and believed that the imperial system arose in Japan in the seventh century. However, gradually I have come to believe that the imperial system was actually formed during the medieval (feudal) period (*chūsei*).” Yoshida also expressed caution when using *Nihon shoki* as a source of information on the formation of the imperial system in Japan, “I realized that I have to be very careful when using the modern translation of *Nihon shoki* because it does not reflect the ancient history of Japan. We need to read *Nihon shoki* in the original.” He also added, “While I was doing research, my views on my fields of research have undergone a major transformation. What is the ancient history of Japan? How do we define state, nation, and national history? These questions still stand,” he shared his doubts.

Similarly, Yoshida’s views on the history of Japanese Buddhism have changed with time. “I have come to realize that the concept of State Buddhism was a political construct artificially created during the Meiji period. Moreover, I have come to doubt the very notion of ‘Japanese Buddhism’ itself. For example, Bud-

dhism-Shinto syncretism in Japan is considered a significant feature of Japanese Buddhism but apparently it is not that unique at all. If we look at *The Continued Biographies of Eminent Priests (Zoku Kōsōden)* we will discover a prototype of the absorption of Buddhist personalities (bodhisattvas) into Chinese pagan deities in this text. Perhaps this seemingly unique Buddhism-Shinto syncretism is not a native product but a foreign adoption? Can we talk about ‘Japanese Buddhism’ or should we expand our research framework to ‘Asian Buddhism?’” Yoshida thus summarized his views and added that he is currently collecting data overseas to prove this hypothesis.

As a piece of advice to young scholars, Yoshida suggested that they study *kanbun* as a useful tool in Buddhist Studies. “As a representative of an older generation, I am not fluent in English, and I do not know Korean or Chinese languages either. But whenever I go to historical museums in Korea, China, or Vietnam, I am amazed that I can read and understand the names of Buddhist statues and other artifacts. I am very thankful to my university teacher from whom I learnt *kanbun* as a student,” concluded Yoshida. He urged the young scholars to learn *kanbun* as it opens the doors to understanding ancient Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese Buddhist texts.

Abe Yoshirō (Nagoya University) introduced himself as a scholar of religion working within a broader field of comparative anthropology and cultural ethnology. His particular interests lie in the intersections of medieval literature and medieval religious worlds. He looks at ancient and medieval tales, poems, play scripts, and other literary materials in search for religion-related plots. Ever since he moved from Kansai to Nagoya some twenty years ago, he has been heavily involved in a number of collaborative research projects centered on historical documents discovered in the Ōsu-kannon Buddhist temple in Nagoya. The Ōsu-kannon temple is famous for having the archives on *Kojiki*, but in addition this temple contains an incredible number of valuable historical documents, particularly in Shinto and Mikkyō Buddhism. The importance of studying these documents cannot be overestimated: they can change our perception of ancient and medieval Japanese Buddhism entirely. For example, internationally, Japan is famous for Zen Buddhism. However, while everyone has the image of Japanese Buddhism as Zen, in reality it was Mikkyō that was the predominant branch of Buddhism in medieval Japan. If we look at the historical documents found in the Ōsu-kannon



temple we will see that Zen has grown out of Mikkyō and as a challenge to Mikkyō—this is why it is crucial to pay close attention to primary sources. Abe insisted that Buddhist temples around Japan have innumerable precious historical documents yet to be discovered—the Ōsu-kannon temple is only one of them. A team of scholars has been sorting out, systematizing and preserving the archives of the Ōsu-kannon temple for future generations—but there are still many other temples whose archives are waiting to be systematized and preserved.

Abe also shared that he has been involved in a wide-ranging research project on the history of Aichi Prefecture. The Ōsu-kannon temple and other temples in Aichi Prefecture contain a huge number of historical documents which have been collected, analyzed, and interpreted by local historians. The documents were fragmented and it took much time and effort to make a coherent compilation of the history of Aichi Prefecture, but in the end the team of historians managed to publish a history of Aichi Prefecture in one volume. In this regard, Abe emphasized the importance of teamwork and research networks: it would be impossible for a single researcher to analyze all historical documents from ancient times until present, even if limited to the parameters of local history. Grandiose research projects require team effort and the exchange of ideas.

In conclusion, Abe advised the young scholars to (1) pay close attention to primary sources as opposed to secondary sources—not only in Japan but around the world; (2) take risks, create international research networks, meet new people, seek opportunities to meet prominent scholars in the field, and so forth. Most importantly, speaking from his experience as a young student, Abe encouraged the participants to never underestimate the significance of improbable meetings (*fishigina deai*) with interesting people who can bring a fresh perspective to their research and may change their direction entirely.

Following the introductions, the participants and commentators had a brief discussion during which the main questions for the present seminar were outlined: (1) what are the new ways to overcome orientalism in the field of Buddhist Studies? (2) how can we practically improve research networks uniting Buddhist scholars around the world? (3) how can we create or improve the existing accessible databases for the international community of researchers?

Okuyama wrapped up the first part of the Seminar, “Many pessimistic voices have arisen recently saying that the future of the academia is gloomy. This is not true. As we are seeing today at his Seminar, we have savvy mature academics and we have brilliant young scholars and there is an intellectual connection between these two generations. It gives us hope that the future is bright and the academic world is yet to see great things from the new generation of intellectuals.”

Presentations by International Graduate Students

The participants were asked to write a brief introduction to their research along the following lines: (1) What is your research background? What is your working hypothesis? (2) Highlight the problematic (is this an unresolved issue in the field? What should specifically be resolved and why? (3) Originality: what is your original contribution to the field? How does your analysis differ from that of the prior research? Do you critique the authorities in the field, do you offer a new methodology or a new perspective? (4) Conclusion: do you actually propose a solution to the problem? Is there a solution? If not, why? (5) The significance of your research: why is it important and for whom? (6) Anything else you would like to add or emphasize.

Eric Swanson

Eric Swanson spoke on “The Subjugation of Original Hindrance in Esoteric Buddhist Ritual: Myōō and the function of subjugation in the writings of Godaiin Annen”:

“My research background has mainly been in Buddhology and the philological study of Buddhist texts, focusing on the Esoteric Buddhist tradition. Broadly speaking, I am interested in studying the concept of *chōbuku* 調伏, or “subjugation,” in the Esoteric Buddhist tradition and how this concept developed across various religious traditions in East Asia, with a particular focus on the medieval period in Japan. *Chōbuku* is a concept that appears across various religious practices throughout the medieval period, ranging from visualized subjugation of ignorance in the context of Esoteric Buddhist rituals, the ritual submission of local kami, the dispelling of ghosts and spirits by mountain ascetics, the purging of plagues, and the subjugation of political enemies, as seen in rituals conducted with the purpose of eradicating Taira no Masakado’s rebellion and the Mongol Invasions. Despite the fact that the rhetoric of subjugation had a profound impact in the way in which religious culture developed in the medieval period, there has yet to be a sufficient study regarding how the concept of subjugation developed during this period.

“For the paper I presented at the Nanzan Seminar for the Study of Japanese Religions, I discussed the role of *myōō* 明王 and its function as the subjugator of hindrances (*shō* 障) as seen in the writings of Godai-in Annen 五大院安然 (841–915?), with a particular focus on his notion of ‘the samadhi of the subjugation of demons’ (*gōma san’maji* 降魔三昧地), as seen in his *Shingonshū kyōjigi* 真言宗教時義. A close reading of Annen’s doctrinal analysis of the role of *myōō* in relation to concepts of subjugation provides a better understanding of the function of Esoteric Buddhist ritual and points to important implications it has regarding soteriological concerns of enlightenment in the Esoteric Buddhist tradition.



My paper also suggests that the significance of *myōō* and the notion of subjugation can be seen in the way in which Annen uses these as key elements that differentiates the ‘esoteric’ tradition from the ‘exoteric’ tradition, showing that the *myōō* played a crucial role in the construction of an ‘Esoteric Buddhist’ identity.

“There were two main points that I intended to illustrate in this paper. The first was to demonstrate that what Annen had conceptualized as *chōbuku* 調伏 or *gōma* 降魔 is significantly different from how this

idea found applications in the social and political contexts of medieval Japan. Secondly, by showing that the notion of *chōbuku* was in fact a central concept in the very construction of an esoteric Buddhist identity, I also call into question previous conceptual frameworks that have been used to analyze medieval religious culture, such as Shimaji Daitō and Tamura Yoshiro’s ‘original-enlightenment thought’ (*hongaku shisōron* 本覚思想論) and Kuroda Toshio’s ‘exoteric-esoteric system’ (*kenmitsu taisei-ron* 顕密体制論), which have neglected to fully recognize the importance of the concept of *chōbuku* in their analysis. I argue that these previous conceptual frameworks have its own limitations and a revision of these conceptual frameworks is needed to fully understand the role and function of the esoteric Buddhist traditions in medieval Japan. In a larger picture, this paper acts as a critique of modern Buddhology, in which the ‘doctrinal’ has been treated as worthy subjects of study, while the notion of ‘subjugation’ in their conventional view has to do with rituals or even magic/superstition, and therefore has been regarded as insignificant for a serious academic inquiry.

“In my dissertation research, I hope to further elaborate on these points to show how the theoretical observations made in this paper relate to the historical developments of *myōō* iconography, the ritual practices of worshipping them for the purpose of subjugation, and their political implications for the exoteric-esoteric orthodoxy. It is my hope that this study of the broad notion of ‘subjugation’ will allow me not only to transcend an ahistorical view of medieval religious culture dictated by sectarian interests and divisions, but that this project would also help in bridging together various academic disciplines, including textual studies, visual art, literature, and ritual studies, in a more productive dialogue that will help illuminate the dynamics of medieval religious culture.”

DISCUSSION

Abe was the first to comment on Swanson's presentation. He pointed out that Swanson's presentation was very well-organized, clearly-structured and insightful. As a piece of advice, Abe suggested that Swanson should have provided more in-depth background on the evolution of Annen's religious views.

In this respect, in addition to the works by Kuroda Toshio and Tamura Yoshirō selected by Swanson, Abe recommended the work by the Nichibunken professor, Sueki Fumihiko 末木文美士, 平安初期仏教思想史研究—安然の思想形成を中心として、1995). This book provides a comprehensive all-rounded introduction to the Annen's thought and it also elucidates Annen's role as a historical figure in ancient Japan. "Swanson's research introduces the concept of subjugation as a useful tool for the re-interpretation of Annen's understanding of Buddhism and this new perspective opens the door of opportunity to revisit ancient Buddhist history in Japan with fresh eyes. However, it would have been helpful if Swanson had given more attention to the fundamentals of Annen's thought and provided a more comprehensive 'big picture' on his religious views," commented Abe. "The significance of the concept of subjugation in understanding of Annen's thought may be easier to grasp when one knows who Annen really was and what he accomplished. It is important to remember that Annen was a great religious reformer who sparked a powerful paradigm shift in the acceptance of Buddhism in ancient Japan by emphasizing the metaphysical aspects of Mikkyō cosmology. Annen turned the tables when he prioritized Mikkyō over Tendai, following Kūkai who perceived Shingon as the first among various Buddhist sects in Japan."

Abe also indicated that we need to keep in mind a wide range of problems when thinking about the formation of early Buddhism in Japan and the problem of language is one of them. The importation of *kanji* (Chinese characters), the formation of the Japanese writing system (*kango*, *wago*, *gojūon*), etc. were intricately interwoven with the evolution of the early Buddhist thought in Japan (in fact, Kūkai put particular emphasis on the choice of *kanji*.)

Finally, we need to remember that Annen's greatest influence was in his introduction of the idea of *sokushin jōbutsu* to ancient Japan. *Sokushin jōbutsu* means that one becomes a Buddha in this present physical body. This soteriological concept of the *embodiment* of salvation (deliverance, enlightenment) went far beyond the Mikkyō sect and influenced all Buddhist sects in Japan.

Abe went on to explain that the problematization of "the samadhi of the subjugation of demons" in Mikkyō should be approached in the broader context of the four types of mandala (*shishu mandara*), which reflect various types of samadhi and the role of the Wisdom King Acala (*Fudō-myōō*) as a very important representative of samadhi. Another important idea for Annen was

the idea of the interconnectedness of all things (“one is in all and all is in one”). This idea became predominant in Mikkyō first and then influenced all other Buddhist sects in Japan (“One Buddha [Buddha-mindfulness or *nenbutsu*] is in all Buddhas and all Buddhas are in one Buddha”). This was a starting point of Annen’s philosophy which evolved into the concept of “the samadhi of the subjugation of demons” by the power of the Wisdom King Acala and Aizen Myōō. Annen was very serious about the popularization of the cult of both Fudō Myōō and Aizen Myōō; he was concerned with the standardization of their style, rituals, cosmology and other religious aspects. But what is crucial to understand here is that it was Annen who was responsible for the popularization of the cult of Aizen Myōō in Japan. Aizen Myōō was not part of the Five Great Wisdom Kings of (*godai myōō*) of the Womb Realm of Vajrayana and, therefore, not part of the Kūkai’s Buddhist world. But thanks to Annen, the impact of the cult of Aizen Myōō in medieval Japan became very deep: eventually, it got far greater than that of Fudō Myōō. Abe concluded that we need to keep in mind Annen’s starting point in order to understand his philosophy and to trace how Japanese Esoteric Buddhism evolved, spread and got perceived in Japan and the world. In this regard, Abe expressed hope that Swanson would touch more upon these issues in his analysis of Annen’s thought and recommended the work of Yamamoto Hiroko 山本ひろ子, 「中世における愛染明王法 そのポリティクスとエロス」(『日本の美術 376 愛染明王像, 1997).

Swanson responded that, unfortunately, he was not able to touch on various fundamental aspects of Annen’s religious philosophy in his presentation due to time restraints. He commented that the cult of Aizen Myōō is, indeed, critical to the understanding of Annen’s thought. This cult grew from Kūkai’s original teachings but it had not been popularized prior to Annen for both political and doctrinal reasons. Unlike his predecessor Enchin, Annen did not seem to have had political acumen with regard to the spread of his teachings, and the cult of Aizen Myōō was not adopted by the Hieizan Tendai School because it was not deemed necessary there.

Yoshida asked Swanson three questions. First, he asked for a clarification of the meaning of *rikiyū* (as opposed to *ron’yū*) in Annen’s philosophy. Second, he requested a clarification of Annen’s understanding of the relationship between the Diamond Realm and the Womb Realm. Obviously, Annen’s explanation of the relationship between the two realms followed the original version by Hui-kuo, but was there a difference? Is it true that Hui-kuo did not distinguish between the two realms, but Annen did? Finally, Yoshida inquired about Gōzanze Myōō and his role in the conceptualization of subjugation.

Swanson responded that the reason why Annen preferred the term *rikiyū* to *ron’yū* was that while *ron’yū*, in the context in which Chih-i used it in his commentary on the *Lotus Sutra* meant the “function of the teachings,” Annen’s use

of the term *rikiyū* emphasized the “function of the power of the Buddha.” Perhaps Annen wanted to make a distinction between Chih-i’s focus on the text to a stronger emphasis on the implications of the power of the Buddha’s speech in the Esoteric Buddhist ritual.

As for Annen’s understanding of the Diamond Realm and the Womb Realm, Swanson suggested that, indeed, the conceptualization of the Diamond Realm and the Womb Realm as a picture of the Buddhist universe is central to Mikkyō-Shingon faith as established by Kōbō Daishi Kūkai. While both realms were important for Hui-kuo, in Japan there was a tendency to focus on one over the other mainly due to issues of lineage and institutional differences. The Tendai lineage tended to focus more on the Womb Realm and the Shingon lineage the Diamond Realm. Annen’s interest in *Yugikyō* and Aizen Myōō may have been partially influenced by Kūkai’s writings, which tended to focus on the teachings of the Diamond Realm. This difference of emphasis between the Tendai and Shingon lineages may also explain why the cult of Aizen Myōō was not initially adopted by the Hieizan Tendai School.

Finally, regarding Gōzanze Myōō and his role in the conceptualization of subjugation, Swanson responded that being the subjugation of Mahesvara—the deity of the *triloka* (the three realms that constitute our world)—Gōzanze Myōō was considered to have control over all things. This idea was particularly realized in Shingon rituals which emphasized that Gōzanze Myōō had the power to subjugate all things in the three realms. Annen cultivated the worship of Gōzanze Myōō as reflected in the Shingon Rishukyō doctrine/rituals.

Other questions from the audience concerned the number of linguistic difficulties which arise in dealing with Buddhist terms. How can *gōma san’maji* be translated into English? How can *rikiyū* be translated into English? Swanson responded that the most appropriate equivalent for *san’maji* would be “concentration” or “meditation” but, perhaps, it is best to leave the Sanskrit original as it is: *samadhi*. *Gōma san’maji* then would be “the subjugation of evil.” *Rikiyū* is even more difficult to translate; we translate it simply as “function,” which does not reflect the original depth of the meaning of the Chinese character. The participants concluded that for the understanding of the evolution of Japanese Buddhism it is crucially important to trace the original meaning of Buddhist terms back to their original Chinese texts or even back to Sanskrit, otherwise the original meaning may be “lost in translation.”

Luke Thompson

The second presentation of the day was on, “Bringing Śākyamuni to Japan: The Japanese Reception of the *Hikekyō* and the Medieval Fabrication of Myth,” by Luke Thompson (Columbia University). He summarized his presentation highlights as follows:

The presentation focused on the early medieval Japanese reception of a Buddhist sutra called the *Hikekyō* and the way in which this sutra came to serve as a scriptural basis for devotion to Śākyamuni in Japan. He made three points concerning this interest in the *Hikekyō* among a certain circle of Japanese clerics. First, in works appearing from the thirteenth-century on one finds the assertion that in the *Hikekyō* the Buddha promised that during the final age of the Dharma (*mappō*) he would appear as a *daimyōjin* to save everyone. Thompson argued that this assertion,



which is not an accurate reflection of the *Hikekyō* itself, should be understood in the context of a new vision of history based on the *sangoku* 三国 framework. This model rendered history synonymous with the transmission of Buddhism from India to China, and thence to Japan, and for some Japanese clerics this model made clear how geographically and historically distant Japan was from ancient India. The assertion that Śākyamuni would appear as a *daimyōjin* in the time of *mappō* can be understood, then, as a means of closing that geographical and historical gap.

The second point that Thompson made is that the *Hikekyō*'s Śākyamuni is different from alternative portrayals available to the Japanese. In the *Hikekyō* the Buddha is a salvific figure entirely committed to this world and its inhabitants (rather than to a pure land elsewhere). For those who wanted to turn back to Śākyamuni and reconnect with the founder of the tradition—a founder who in the *sangoku* view of things was very far away indeed—the *Hikekyō* provided the narrative that supplied them with a connection to Śākyamuni both in the past and in the future: in the past because the sūtra tells us that long ago Śākyamuni resolved to come to this defiled world for our sake, and in the future because the sūtra describes how Śākyamuni will save us in a future time when the world is without a buddha. According to Thompson, the *Hikekyō*'s Śākyamuni is neither the hagiographical buddha of the *Kako genzai inga kyō* 過去現在因果經 and related texts (a figure who was alternatively a model for emulation or an object of worship), nor the transcendental, eternal buddha of the Lotus Sūtra and Nirvāṇa Sūtra.

The final point he made is that the false attribution to the *Hikekyō* of the idea that Śākyamuni will appear as a *daimyōjin* might be best understood as another instance of so-called medieval mythology (*chūsei shinwa* 中世神話), whereby new narratives are attributed to authoritative sources, though exactly how such

assertions develop is not always entirely clear. In the same way that the *Nihongi* became a symbol of sorts—an authority to which one could refer to make a number of related claims—so too did the *Hikekyō* become an authoritative text to which one could refer when making assertions about Śākyamuni and his salvific character.

One problem Thompson pointed to is the lack of scholarship on Japanese worship of and understandings of Śākyamuni. Admittedly this could be attributed to the fact that in Japan (much as in other Buddhist countries) Śākyamuni's centrality was always eclipsed by other buddhas, bodhisattvas, and deities, who were of far greater relevance to the needs of clerics, aristocrats, warriors, merchants, farmers, and so on. However, Thompson believes that it is precisely because of this fact that the rise in Japanese devotion to Śākyamuni during the early medieval period (albeit only among certain groups) is so interesting. What function did Śākyamuni now perform? Why was he more suitable than other buddhas and bodhisattvas?

Thompson argued that the function of Śākyamuni in this case was to link Japanese Buddhism to the origins of Buddhism (in the figure of the Indian Buddha). This concern with origins—with returning to the fundamentals and to the wellspring of the tradition—should in turn be understood in the context of the instability of the twelfth century and the razing of Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji in 1180. In this sense, those that turned to Śākyamuni were not so dissimilar from those who turned to Amida: both groups created new devotional focal points as a means of coming to terms with (and perhaps escaping from) a period that was seen as the final age of the Dharma, on the one hand, and was characterized by civil war and social instability, on the other.

But where does the *Hikekyō* fit into all of this? Thompson argued that the *Hikekyō*'s portrayal of Śākyamuni was attractive because it so emphasized the Buddha's vow to be reborn in a defiled world (rather than a pure land) and thus the Buddha's connection to us. This is something that is present in the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, two other possible sources for Japanese devotion to Śākyamuni, but not to the same extent. Thus, for those wishing to “return” to Śākyamuni, the *Hikekyō*'s Buddha was far more satisfying than the transcendental Buddha of the *Lotus Sūtra* and *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.

The role of the *Hikekyō* in medieval Japan has been touched upon by Japanese scholars (most notably Iwagami Kazunori 石上和敬, Sueki Fumihiko 末本文美士, Narita Teikan 成田貞寛, and Imahori Taitsu 今堀太逸 but no one has used devotion to Śākyamuni and the Japanese reception of the *Hikekyō* together as a lens through which to understand contemporaneous issues (e.g., early medieval Japanese Buddhist historical thought and identity). While it is true that the importance of Śākyamuni never reached the levels enjoyed by, say, Amida, Kannon, Inari, or Hachiman, and while the influence of the *Hikekyō*

remained limited to particular circles and institutions, the *Hikekyō* and the Śākyamuni-devotion for which it served as scriptural authority forces us to ask questions about how Japanese Buddhists understood their own position within Buddhist history. In this way research on this topic can shed light on issues of broad and lasting significance within Japanese and Buddhist Studies.

DISCUSSION

Yoshida was the first to comment on Thompson's presentation. He pointed out that this research theme is not only very interesting but also very important for Buddhist Studies in general. Yoshida stated that it is indeed very interesting that Japanese monks and texts of the 12th century started attributing salvific properties to Śākyamuni despite the original texts not containing this idea. Yoshida suggested that the doctrines of *sangoku* and *mappō*, which originated in China and spread to Japan, played a major role in it. He insisted that we need to investigate how these doctrines look in the original Sanskrit texts and in their Chinese adaptations.

"In my understanding," said Yoshida, "what happened was that originally *mappō* was associated with Miroku Bosatsu (Maitreya) but gradually the *mappō* soteriology shifted toward the cult of Amida (Amitābha) in Japan. Perhaps, clerics Jōkei and Myōe wanted to correct this erroneous tendency and tried to bring Japanese Buddhism back to the right course: 'It is Shaka, it is not Amida!' Perhaps, they also liked the fact that Śākyamuni took 500 vows in contrast to Amida who took 'only' 48 vows. Maybe they felt that it made it easier to 'outdo' the cult of Amida?" proposed Yoshida. "The Japanese clerics of that time were probably well aware of the fact that the *mappō* doctrine had deviated from its Indian origins and had undergone significant transformations as it spread through China and South East Asia. Then, when Hōnen linked the *mappō* doctrine to the cult of Amida, perhaps, Jōkei and Myōe felt prompted to rebel and propose the alternative? And as they were trying to do that, they came up with a reformed image of Śākyamuni as a savior as opposed to the original image of Śākyamuni as a teacher. May we assume that the doctrines of Jōkei and Myōe arose in opposition to the Pure Land Buddhism and other sects?"

Thompson responded that it is an interesting suggestion and it could be true. Jōkei was actually devoted to Amida as well, particularly early on in his career. However, in a number of works he criticized those who worshipped Amida to the exclusion of all others.

Yoshida restated this question on the relationship between the *mappō* doctrine and the emergence of the soteriological image of Śākyamuni in the 12th century Japan: "We know (according to the *Advent of Maitreya Sutra* – A.G.) that Maitreya, being a successor of Śākyamuni, will reappear in the world 5,670

million years after Śākyamuni's death. Could it be true that Jōkei and Myōe wanted to emphasize this fact and to strip Amida of his 'false' image as a savior?"

Thompson replied that (1) Jōkei's understanding of the *mappō* doctrine is unclear; (2) Nevertheless, there is clear connection between the *mappō* doctrine and Śākyamuni's reappearance as daimyōjin; (3) It is most probable that clerics Jōkei, Myōe, and Eison were more concerned with bringing Buddhism back to its original roots rather than with the reform of the *mappō* doctrine. They wanted, first and foremost, to reconnect Buddhism with its historical founder, Śākyamuni.

Abe was next to comment on Thompson's presentation and suggested that we should not underestimate the role of mythology in the production of the image of Śākyamuni as a salvific figure. Medieval myth (*chūsei shinwa*) is a powerful creative force; it draws on Buddhist concepts and creates new worlds far greater than the original Buddhist doctrines. There are multiple examples in the history of medieval literature: popular myths using the tools of hyperbola, grotesque, and exaggeration take historical figures and bestow them with divine powers. It could be true, of course, that there was a noble attempt to go back to the "pure Buddhist doctrine" in ascribing salvific powers to Śākyamuni, but it could also be true that it was the power of the myth-consciousness stretching the doctrine beyond its original limits (especially that we see that Śākyamuni was conceptualized as *daimyōjin*.) As we see on the *Kasugamiya mandara* 春日宮曼荼羅 painting (Nara National Museum), daimyōjin representing Śākyamuni was not merely an abstract figure for Jōkei, Myōe, and Eison—he was a very real figure. We know that this medieval mythography is not unique to Buddhism; it is universal and widely present in all religions.

Awazu supported Abe's idea of the universal mythographic tendency to exaggerate and stretch original doctrines by giving an example from Christianity. In Christianity, revivals are often linked with apocalyptic and soteriological ideas and it could have been that the ascribing of the salvific properties to Śākyamuni as a savior in the 12th century Japan was a similar phenomenon.

Yoshida inquired who appeared first as a compassionate savior in the Japanese Buddhist consciousness: Śākyamuni or Kannon (Avalokiteśvara)? Thompson and Abe confirmed that Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) was obviously the first. Abe explained that, as evident from *Kasugamiya mandara*, originally daimyōjin was associated with Kannon but gradually shifted to Śākyamuni.

Swanson asked about the difference between the interpretation of the *mappō* doctrine in the *Hikekyō* and in Tendai, Shingon, and Jōdo-shū schools. "We know that Jōkei had faith in salvation through Amida but perhaps the idea of salvation through Amida was too abstract? Maybe Jōkei tried to make the idea of salvation more easily understandable and 'user-friendly'? After all, we know that the practical side of the doctrine of salvation by Śākyamuni was the Śākyamuni's

relics: they had the power to give salvation during the long period of waiting for the return of Maitreya. Was it because of the relics and the practical side of the *Hikekyō* that the cult of Śākyamuni grew in power?” Thompson argued that this is questionable because Jōkei seems to be using similar expressions when discussing different approaches and he does not seem to discriminate between the abstract and the concrete.

Dolce proposed that maybe Śākyamuni, being so close to this defiled world, was a great inspiration for the faith of the masses? Abe suggested that maybe another reason for the revival of the cult of Śākyamuni was the fact that Tōdaiji was burnt down because of the war in 1180? Thompson concluded that we can speculate about the factors which prompted the Japanese clerics of the 12th century to rediscover the original roots of Buddhism in the *Hikekyō* but we do not know the answer. Obviously, the conception of *sangoku* played a great role in this process but what was the impetus for the portrayal of Śākyamuni as a savior: was it the war and political instability? Was it popularization of his image in *chūsei shinwa*? Was it a form of competition between various Buddhist sects? The question still stands.

Paride Stortini

Paride Stortini's presentation focused on “East and West of the Tsukiji Honganji. Interpreting the Modern History of a Peculiar Jōdo Shinshū Temple through Translocative Analysis and Intercultural Mimesis.” In his own words: was by Paride Stortini (University of Chicago). The following is the summary of the presentation:

This presentation is aimed at applying two theories, Thomas Tweed's “translocative analysis” and Charles Hallisey's “intercultural mimesis,” to the case study of the Tsukiji Honganji temple in Tokyo. The theoretical background of such work was provided by my previous research on Buddhism in Europe, when I found those two paradigms very useful in making sense of the complexity of production and exchange of ideas about Buddhism in the orientalist and colonial context, as well as in order to follow the flow of religious ideas through migration.

The Tsukiji Honganji temple, which became part of my more recent interest in the image of Indian Buddhism in



modern Japanese historiography and travel literature, offered an ideal case study to apply the two theories in combination. On one side, the ‘Indian’ architectural style of the temple is presented as the product of the triangular interaction between European scholarship on Buddhism, the birth of modern Buddhist Studies in Japan and the travels of Japanese monks and scholars to Indian Buddhist sites, and such interaction is analyzed through the intercultural mimesis approach. On the other side, some post-war features of the temple aimed at an English-speaking international community are understood through the history of trans-pacific exchanges in the Japanese-American Jōdo Shinshū community, and translocative analysis perfectly fits such fluid context. The borders between what is Japanese, Indian and Western, as well as what is modern and what is rooted in tradition, are blurred in the façade of the Tsukiji Honganji and also in the Buddhist wedding ceremonies performed in the temple.

The originality of the presentation lies in showing how a combination of two theories that stress transnational fluidity of ideas and subject-object reciprocal influence in the production of modern images of Buddhism, can be used to enrich recent research on modern Japanese Buddhism. Certainly, such presentation can be considered a preliminary study for more in depth work. In particular, more research on the reception and imagination of Indian Buddhism in modern Japanese Buddhist art and architecture, such as in architect Itō Chūta’s view of pan-Asianism, is required. In addition, a deeper theoretical reflection on the impact of material culture on modern Japanese Buddhism could offer fresh perspectives. Finally, the political and economic aspects of such developments deserve more space in the future development of my work. As the studies in the volume edited by Ogawara Masamichi show,¹ there is still little research on the reciprocal influence of Asian travelling and the birth of modern Buddhist Studies in Meiji Japan, but it is a very promising field. The purpose of my presentation is to provide a little contribution to such a young field.

DISCUSSION

Ōtani was the first to comment on Stortini’s presentation. He pointed out that the two keywords used in the presentation, “overcoming orientalism” and “material culture,” are very important pressing issues in contemporary Buddhist Studies. Ōtani noted that the boom of the critique on orientalism is a fairly recent phenomenon among Japanese scholars of Buddhism: the trend grew significantly in the 2000s. Stortini’s choice of selected bibliography on the sub-

1. Ogawara Masami 小川原正道編 『近代日本の仏教者——アジア体験と思想の変容』 (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2010).

ject clearly demonstrates that most works he quoted were published after 2000. Speaking of useful literature on the subject, Ōtani especially recommended the book by Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and "The Mystic East"* (1999). As for Japanese critics of orientalism, Ōtani highly recommended the book by Kawase Takaya 川瀬貴也, 『植民地朝鮮の宗教と学知——帝国日本の眼差しの構築』(2009). This book gives a summary of the range of approaches to the critique of orientalism in Japan. Still, there are very few academic works on Buddhist material culture in Japan. This subject is very popular in Europe and especially in the USA, but not in Japan, so Stortini's work is very significant.

Ōtani asked three questions: (1) Stortini's analytical framework of intercultural mimesis and transnational history is very helpful in analyzing such complex architectural phenomenon as Tsukiji Honganji. Indeed, hybridity is typical of modern Buddhism and Tsukiji Honganji is an excellent example of an eclectic synthesis of cultures of Europe and Asia. But how about the political side of things? For example, Richard Jaffe (see "Buddhist Material Culture, Indianism, and the Construction of Pan-Asian Buddhism in Pre-War Japan," *Material Religion* 21/3 [2006]) has argued that building Indian buildings in Japan was largely driven by political ambitions. Ōtani asked Stortini to clarify the political elements in the construction of Tsukiji Honganji; (2) What is the religious function of Tsukiji Honganji? What is a modern side of Tsukiji Honganji? What is a traditional side of Tsukiji Honganji? (3) We know that many new religious buildings were constructed during the modern period. These include Heian Jingu (1895), Yasukuni Jinja (1869–1879), Nakayama Hokekyōji (1931), and finally Tsukiji Honganji (1934). They were constructed using concrete and other stable materials, which was a direct consequence of the Great Kanto Earthquake. How does Tsukiji Honganji fit within the framework of the boom of construction of Buddhist temples during the modern period?

Stortini responded that (1) when two worlds (European and Asian) or two multifaceted civilizations (Occidental and Oriental) collide, it is not simply two sides that clash at once but many different sides: political, economic, religious, social, and even basic daily-life aspects. While his predecessors (see James E. Ketelaar, "Strategic Occidentalism: Meiji Buddhists at the World's Parliament of Religions," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 11 [1991], and Richard Jaffe [op. cit.]) largely focused on the political reasons that informed such processes, Stortini believes that his analytical framework should not be limited by the politics alone. "Of course, we cannot ignore the political side of things. I am interested in what role Tsukiji Honganji played during the period of imperialism from the 1930s in Japan. But I am more interested in how the political side of things influenced the general public and their perception of modern Buddhism in daily life." argued Stortini.

(2) As for modern and traditional functions of Tsukiji Honganji, Stortini solicited the participants to simply have a look at the exterior of the temple: it has modern characters on the gates and traditional decorations inside. The more challenging question would be about the religious functions of Tsukiji Honganji. How did Indian Buddhist thought influence Jōdo Shinshū in the religious functioning of Tsukiji Honganji? There are Indian decorations, Indian-style clothes, etc. but there seems to be very little authentic Indian Buddhist influence on the doctrine and the rituals of the temple. Tsukiji Honganji magazine often publishes pictures of Indian archeological sites and ruins but can it be considered a sufficient religious connection with India? The question still stands.

(3) Stortini expressed a belief that, first of all, the construction of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples during the modern period was different and we cannot approach, for example, Heian Jingu and Tsukiji Honganji in the same terms. According to Fujinori Terunobu 藤森照信, a renowned historian on Japanese architecture, the architect of Tsukiji Honganji Itō Chūta 伊東忠太 was, first and foremost, seeking to create a modern pan-Asian identity in the construction of this temple. Fujinori Terunobu argues that while most Japanese architects of the time were aiming at constructing a nationalistic or imperialistic identity, Itō Chūta did not have this tendency. He was more concerned with creating a modern Buddhist identity above all and was using a variety of Asian approaches and techniques in the construction of Tsukiji Honganji.

Kobayashi commented that she had been twice to the Nagoya branch of Tsukiji Honganji temple and she noticed that it was very eclectic: it has Japanese, Chinese, Indian, and European elements. She also added that in Nagoya, Tsukiji Honganji temple is a place where many wealthy, famous people conduct funerals for their relatives and the temple has an overall nouveau-rich atmosphere. In Tokyo it is related to Mitsubishi Corporation and many celebrities, TV personalities, and kabuki actors conduct funerals at Tsukiji Honganji. This temple obviously has high economic and social status and we should not ignore the economic side of things when analyzing its religious function. It would be interesting to trace how the peculiarities of the original construction of Tsukiji Honganji were linked to the high socio-economic status that it enjoys now.

Other participants also commented that material culture is a very important concept for understanding the dynamics of cultural imperialism. Modernity was a historical period when colonial nations were seeking to construct their imperialistic identity. Britain, France, the USA, and other countries put a great emphasis on constructing Greco-roman style memorials and monuments in order to establish their imperialistic presence in the colonized lands. In this light, we may try to rethink the construction of Tsukiji Honganji and other religious buildings in modern Japan: what was the driving force behind this intercultural mimesis,

which brought pan-Asian and European elements together? Perhaps Itō Chūta was partly influenced by the imperialistic atmosphere of his time? Perhaps we cannot analyze Tsukiji Honganji apart from its (modern imperialistic, nationalistic) historical context?

Abe also stressed the importance of studying the history of Japanese architecture for Stortini's research and especially the personality of Itō Chūta. Itō Chūta was a founder of modern Japanese architectural style; he was the one who sought to create a paradigm for Japanese architecture that would make it strikingly different from the architectural styles of the rest of the world. Abe also commented that—whether we want to admit it or not—in Japan, religious architecture plays an important role in creating a nationalistic image. For example, we can see Japan's contemporary obsession with UNESCO world heritage sites. Japan went much further than most countries in creating numerous categories of “national significance” or even local significance for the sites which did not receive the status of the world heritage, and most of these sites are religious temples and shrines. In Abe's view, this designates a link between religion, architecture, and nationalism.

The audience also discussed the “international appeal” of Tsukiji Honganji in terms of Strategic Occidentalism. According to Stortini, Tsukiji Honganji conducts weddings with Christian-like or Western elements, such as ring exchange, pipe organ music, and stained glass windows. The monthly Saturday lectures are led in English and very often the priests that lead them have spent time in Jōdo Shinshū communities in Hawai'i and California. The songs used are in English and have been produced in the context of the Buddhist Churches of America, and sometime use Christian terminology to translate Buddhist concepts. Stortini insisted that intercultural mimesis is a useful interpretive tool to go beyond the traditional dichotomy of East-West in making sense of the moment of cultural contact and exchange. This can be applied in contexts as different as the Tsukiji Honganji and Zen Buddhism in America. In the end, the debate revolved around the concept of material (corporeal) culture. The discussants defined material culture as *an agent who “speaks.”* We are used to thinking of an “agent” and “recipient” in terms of human persons and we are forgetting that material culture can be an agent, too. Material objects (relics, remains, memorials, buildings) can be very moving and at times more powerful agents than human agency.

Stortini concluded: “I am most interested in how common people perceived Tsukiji Honganji at the time and what kind of influence Indian Buddhist thought had on common people who visited this temple. I believe, contemporary Buddhist Studies is too focused on the academic analysis of doctrines and religious texts and gives very little attention to material culture. When I first saw Tsukiji Honganji, I was thrilled by the academic potential of studying the dynamics of

modern Buddhism, ancient Indian Buddhism, Japanese nationalism, cultural imperialism, etc. – a great swarm of ideas comes to the mind of a scholar. But what about a layman? What does Tsukiji Honganji convey to a regular person who visits this temple? Of course, the temple has websites and booklets where one can find more information about Indian Buddhism but is a layman going to study these? What is a common person's relation to religion through objects, rituals, buildings? This is why I am fascinated by material culture. I believe it can help us reconnect with the reality of religious life of real people.”

Justin Stein

Next, Justin Stein made a presentation on “Usui Reiki *Ryōhō*, Reiki, and the Discursive Space of Spiritual Healing in Twentieth-Century Japan.” He is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto and completed a M.A. in Japanese Religion at the University of Hawaii. His dissertation examines the production of the spiritual practices called Usui Reiki *Ryōhō* or Reiki out of a series of interactions between Americans and Japanese over the course of the twentieth century. This study highlights the role of trans-local interaction



in 20th century cultural production in the North Pacific, focusing on ways that Reiki practice has intersected with formulations of nation, religion, science, and medicine. This paper focusses on the question of why Reiki was more “successful” (attracted greater interest, became more widespread) in Japan following its “re-importation to Japan” 逆輸入 in the 1980s and 1990s than it was at the time of its inception in the 1920s. My thesis relies on a discursive shift establishing a “third space” of spiritual healing between neither religion nor medicine. In the 1920s, the government tolerated the unorthodox therapies of *seishin ryōhō* and *reijutsu*, but they occupied a precarious position, as the Japanese state had suppressed “folk therapies” and religious healing practices since the early Meiji. Reiki practitioners at this time drew on religious authority while also distancing Reiki practice from religion in response to anxiety about violating the Medical Practitioners Law (*ishihō*). In contrast, the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of the categories of *seishin sekai* and “alternative medicine,” creating more accepted discursive spaces for healing practices that draw on religious tradition without being religious themselves. Finally, the conclusion (which was not read at the seminar itself due to lack of time), looks at how this changed further in the

renewed perception of religion (particularly new religions) as dangerous in the post-Aum era, and the usage of terms like *mushūkyō* and *supirichuaru / supirichuaritei*.

DISCUSSION

Yoshinaga was the first to comment on Stein's presentation. He discussed the amazing popularity of Reiki around the world as compared to its very little presence in Japan. It is also interesting that Reiki is widely known in the field of religious studies all over the world but it is almost unheard of in Japan. In this sense Reiki may be compared to Japanese Zen: it is indeed an excellent example of trans-local interaction. While Reiki is very well known in academic circles internationally, there are only five academics in the world who do research on Reiki as a serious scholarly pursuit. And three of them (four, including Yoshinaga – A.G.) are present at this Seminar!

Yoshinaga commented on the discursive concept of a “third space” between religion and medicine which Reiki seems to occupy. Yoshinaga explained that the debate on whether Reiki is a religion or a non-religion is overcomplicated by the fact that the definition of religion itself is blurry, *especially* in Japan. We know that *shūkyō* is a modern construct, an attempt to adopt Western categories to Japanese realities—it is an artificial term created in translation. Therefore, there has been an ongoing debate among religious scholars on how to use this term. We should keep this in mind when discussing the peculiarities of the definition of Reiki.

Yoshinaga also indicated that Reiki originally appeared in 1920–1930s during the time of State Shinto when Shinto was officially proclaimed to be non-religion for political reasons. It is evident from the book by *Tenohira ryōji* 手のひら療治 by Mitsui Kōshi 三井甲之 (1930) that there were ultra-nationalist tendencies among Reiki practitioners and that, perhaps, Reiki's non-religious status also played into the hands of Japanese nationalism of the time.

Murayama requested that Stein explain what Reiki healing actually is and how it is performed. Stein explained that there is a large variety of techniques, including laying hands on sick people and channeling healing energy from the universe to the patient; making use of practices from Chinese medicine, inner alchemy, and chakra meditations; moving healing energy through the body; sending healing energy over distance through a photo, and so forth. Since its foundation by Usui Mikao, Reiki has developed many schools and branches and they all have diverse healing techniques. Currently, popular techniques include meditation, Tibetan symbols, crystal balls, and other practices.

Nagaoka (a specialist on new religions of modernity) made a comment that the definition of a “third space” used by Stein for the analysis of Reiki is far broader than “a space between religion and medicine.” In the academic analysis

of new religions, scholars often use a concept of a “third space” between religion and politics, religion and art, religion and science, et cetera. In this sense, how is Reiki different from other new religions of the modern period?

Stein responded that, indeed, a “third space” is a very broad concept, which should be used carefully. However, defining Reiki’s place on the religious marketplace may be more difficult than merely placing it amongst new religions. Before the war, Reiki was perceived as a Shinto sect but not recognized legally by the government, after the war it was legally recognized but pushed into the “third space” on the discursive level. Thus, defining Reiki has been overcomplicated by both internal and external factors.

The participants further discussed the relationship between Reiki and new religions. Yoshinaga noted that there is an active migration of converts between Reiki and new religions. Moreover, some new religions adopt Reiki-like healing methods into their teachings. Yoshinaga further clarified that Reiki’s connection to new religions is greater than Reiki practitioners would like to admit. He even speculatively suggested that Usui Mikao’s Reiki teaching originated from the Shinto cults of Ōmoto-kyō 大本教 and Tairei 太霊 which had existed long before Reiki. Swanson also commented that Reiki draws on the Buddhist ideal of *compassion*, which is an obvious relation to Buddhism. Stein further mentioned Suzuki Bizan 鈴木美山, an influential interpreter of the American new religion of Christian Science, whose writings on what might be called the healing power of affirmation were incorporated into Reiki practice by the founder, Usui. The list goes on.

In this respect, Yoshida asked some basic questions about Reiki: What lies at the foundation of Usui’s teaching? Was there a person or people (or environment) that influenced Usui? Stein explained that in the foundation of Reiki lie ancient syncretic spiritualistic traditions of Shugendō 修験道 and Mikkyō 密教) In Shugendō, Mt. Kurama—the Reiki cradle—is considered the holy mountain. The focus or goal of Shugendō is the development of spiritual experience and spiritual power and it is no wonder that Usui attained enlightenment and conceived the idea of Reiki on Mt. Kurama, one of the centers of Shugendō. Later Usui incorporated other spiritual elements from various esoteric traditions into Reiki, such as mind-cleansing techniques, breathing practices, spiritual rejuvenation and even some elements from Chinese medicine (hence the *ki* 氣 of Reiki) and Indian Yoga.

Swanson inquired about the image of Reiki in popular culture (particularly, anime culture) and how the ideas of “space,” “universe,” “universal light” and other science fiction buzz words contributed to the rise of Reiki’s popularity. Stein responded that the popularization of Reiki in the West occurred way before spirituality-related buzz words became incorporated into popular cul-

ture. The first wave of the spread of Reiki happened in the Taishō period, which was marked by the cult boom connected to the social change in modernity.

The exportation of Reiki to the West at that time was mostly due to the efforts of Takata Hawayo 高田ハワヨ a Hawaii-born Japanese American, who actively promoted Reiki in the English-speaking world since 1937. She was the first to develop the now-standard English translation of *reiki* as “universal energy,” which was translated back into Japanese beginning in the 1980s as *uchū enerugi* 宇宙エネルギー. Additionally, terms such as *uchū*, which can mean “space” as well as “universe,” and phrases like “the power of the universe” *uchū no chikara* 宇宙の力 have been used in Reiki since the 1920s. Later, in the 1980s (Stein continued to explain) Reiki was further popularized by Barbara Weber Ray’s book, *The Reiki Factor: A Guide to Natural Healing, Helping and Wholeness* (1983). The seed fell on good soil: the 1970s and 1980s experienced the second “cult boom” due to the rise of interest in spiritualistic traditions and New Age teachings of all sorts. Spiritual literature on “self-exploration,” “self-knowledge,” and “self-healing” was blossoming; numerous spiritual centers and seminars appeared and Reiki quickly became one of the most appealing spiritual teachings at the time. In Japan, the bubble economy of the 1980s with its production of surplus wealth also indirectly contributed to the popularization of Reiki.

During the 1990s—the age of social instability, loss of traditional values, and weakening of family ties—the interest in spirituality grew internationally and Reiki triumphantly marched around the globe. According to Mochizuki Toshita 望月俊孝 (*Iyashi no te: Uchū Energi (Reiki) katsuyōhō* 癒しの手—宇宙エネルギー「レイキ」活用法 (1995), it was the “crisis mentality” of the 1990s which propelled Reiki to become popular at that time. In Japan, the “crisis mentality” felt especially real in the 1990s: the Great Hanshin Earthquake, the Tokyo Subway sarin attack by Aum Shinrikyō, a growing threat of an environmental disaster—all of

these factors contributed to the creation of the pre-apocalyptic atmosphere. Stein explained: “This is where—according to Mochizuki—Reiki swooped in with its declaration that the 20th century marks the end of this dark world and the 21st century will bring the age of light.” And what the future holds for the Reiki Healing movement, and what the 21st century is to bring, is for us to explore.

Kyle Peters

The final presentation, “Producing the Self-Itself” by Kyle Peters may be summarized in his own words:



“My research background is modern Japanese philosophy, in particular aesthetic philosophy and philosophy of art. My thesis is that the work of Nishida Kitarō can be used to articulate an account of artistic agency that stands as an alternative to the discourses built around either the autonomy of the ‘Individual’ or the ‘death of the author.’ The significance of my research is that with the ascension and subsequent dominance of those structuralist and post-structuralist trends which situate the author as the product of historically and materially determined conditions, many feminist and post-colonial scholars have expressed concerns over the lack of subjective agency, and thus about the unchallenged primacy granted to objective conditions in these accounts of artistic production. In particular, they have questioned the incapacitation of both the female and the colonized subject in these discourses. But rather than slipping back into the modern conception of the author as Individual, a notion which positions authorial output according to an autonomous, stable, and historically invariant essence, these scholars have called for a more balanced account of artistic production that is sensitive to the interrelationship between subjective and objective processes.

“The originality and conceptual conclusion is that the present research uses the work of Nishida to articulate an alternative account of artistic agency. It does so in two stages, corresponding to Nishida’s middle period and late-middle period work. As for the middle period, it uses the notion of the ‘self-itself’ (*jiko jishin*), as an act underlying the subject-object duality articulated in Nishida’s middle period essay ‘Expressive Activity’ (*Hyōgen sayō*), to argue that the fluidity of the artist melts into manifold positions in artistic production, thereby decentering artistic agency across a multitude of positions and diffusing artistic production across the continuum of subjectivity and objectivity. As for the late-middle period, it links the work of art to the processual subject, claiming that the unfolding of the artist is creatively produced through the novelty of the work of art as it reallocates, reorganizes, and redeploys the present within the horizons delimited by the historical body.

“The methodological conclusion is that the paper ends by using these notions to re-conceptualize our understanding of artistic production, the work of art, the artist, as well as the relationship between these notions. Here, subjective agency is secured in active intuition, with subjectivity standing as such only through its fundamental relationality with objectivity, in the interconnection of one and many. Artistic production is rooted in the bidirectional activity of becoming, and is the production of a subjectivity which is placed and positioned in discursive webs as it moves beyond them, reconfiguring and reorienting these discursive ideological systems. This means that no Individual can be deduced from the work of art, and thus there is no stable subjectivity that stands behind, and functions as an absolute link between, the disparate outputs of an artist’s

oeuvre. Instead, there is a dynamic conception of processual subjectivity, produced and extinguished in the present moment.”

DISCUSSION

Heisig was the first to comment on Peters’s presentation. He pointed out that the abstractness of the topic can be traced back to Nishida’s own writings which are notoriously lacking in concrete examples. In his search for a position that transcends the duality of the subjective and the objective on the intuitive, primordial level of experience, Nishida set up a variety of binary oppositions: automatic v. compulsory, internal v. external, immanent v. transcendental, self v. other, Cartesian ego v. historical subject, and so forth. His aim was to overcome these oppositions through performative (or “active” intuition), which Heisig sees as one of Nishida’s ways of introducing *satori* into the discussion without using the term. The problem was how to return to the objective historical world and not get caught in the mind.

In this connection, Heisig questioned how Peters understood the influence of Hegel and Fichte in Nishida’s work. Peters responded that he is planning on pursuing the matter further in his dissertation, placing Nishida within a broader socio-historical moment. But he clarified that for this project wanted to focus on Nishida’s philosophy itself and so restricted his topic accordingly. However, Heisig went on, if Hegel’s notion of “objective spirit” implies that consciousness is always engaged with the historical and social world. Thus, any analysis of a “supraconscious self” cannot be merely mental in nature, as Peters seemed to imply.

After noting the confusion that often results from reading the simple pronominal reflexive *oneself* as a nominal *one’s self*, Heisig pointed out that since Japanese lacks definite and indefinite articles, Nishida typically uses the term 我々の自己 when he wants to say *the self*. Hence the term *jikojishin* (the self itself) may be appropriate for the expression of the abstract self which transcends the dichotomous categorization of reality but it may also just be a reinforced reflexive pronoun. One has to take care. In any case, more clarity is needed in distinguishing the “conscious self” from the “supraconscious self” that lies at the core of Peters’ project.

Heisig also suggested that perhaps it may be more helpful to try to interpret Nishida’s philosophy *historically*, within the context of the Taishō period. In his analysis, Peters draws on Foucauldian criticism and feminist literary criticism, which provide us with useful models (such as the artist-art [author-text] relationship) for the critique of Nishida’s philosophy. However, it may be more useful to try to understand Nishida as a product of his own time and circumstances: he represents the Japanese subjectivism of modern Japan when philosophers were struggling to define the terms of *kojin*, *kosei*, and *shūdan*.

Kim commented that Nishida's conceptualization of "self-reflection" (when we are "reflecting on our own mental phenomenon") as a "mirror" is also very useful for the understanding of Nishida's philosophy.² Kim also mentioned that the idea of the death of the author originally comes from Friedrich Nietzsche's conceptualization of the death of God. At heart of the relationship between (subjective) individual and (objective) discourse lies a Christian idea of the relationship between the Creator and the creation. If we understand a text (artistic production) as a creation, then just like God does not appear in the universe, the author disappears from the text.

Other participants commented that the idea of the death of the author did not originate with Foucault and can be traced back to modern European literature of the 19th century. Famous French writers of the nineteenth century, Gustave Flaubert and Stéphane Mallarmé, conceptualized that a poet disappears when he creates a poem: one sacrifices oneself for the sake of a new creation. There is a dynamic productive relationship between death and life: death implies new creation. Heisig commented that Nishida seems to be saying the same thing about the relationship between the author and the text: there is a dynamic transformation of the creator (author, artist) into his creation (text, art).

Govorounova commented that in order to enrich the discussion on the relationship between the author and the text (artist and art) it may be useful to explore the works by a world-renowned Russian philosopher and the founding father of literary criticism, Michael Bakhtin. She mentioned his work, *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity* (1920–1924) in which Bakhtin brings up the problem of "the author's relation to a hero/protagonist." For example, there are many characters in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Which of them represents the author? All of them? None of them? Are they independent creations? How much of the author's personality is refracted through them? Bakhtin also famously created the terms "heteroglossia" and "polyphony" to convey the idea that all characters in a novel speak in their independent voices and (in the minds of the reader) live lives independent from the author. Indeed, the death of the author produces the life in his characters.

Govorounova also challenged Peters' two-fold theoretical framework which focuses on the relationship between the artist/author and the art/text (hence subject-object relationship) and does not take into account the third dimension: the recipient (the viewer, the reader). "Let's take a book by Heisig. Here we have the author and his creation, his book. I open the book, start reading it and the meaning arises in my mind. I close the book—where did the meaning go? Where is it now? Where does it objectively exist, in what universe? More-

2. See Michel Dalissier, "The Idea of the Mirror in Nishida and Dōgen," in James W. Heisig, ed., *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy* (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, 2006), 99–142.

over, if I cannot read Japanese, I would be staring at the pages of the book and wondering what it means. The meaning does not exist “objectively” unless there is someone who can decode it subjectively. And when I am reading this text, who is creating the meaning? Was it the author who had originally created the meaning or is it me, the reader, who is creating the meaning in her mind while reading? And not to forget, as I am reading, I refract the original meaning in my mind according to my personal background, experiences, and biases. What the author had originally meant to say and what I understood through the prism of my personality may be totally different in the end. In this respect, what is “the objectivity of meaning” as a philosophical category?” That is to say, in semiotics we have a problem of encoding and decoding of meaning. This is why we should include the notion of the *reader response* into our analysis of the subject-object relationship.

In response, Peters brought up Roland Barthes’s idea of the birth of the reader and conceptualized that, according to Barthes, the author’s subjectivity is produced through his death and as much as the reader’s subjectivity is produced through his birth: the subjectivity of both is being produced *through* the text at the moment of creation. Heisig also added that Nishida used an expression *mono o narikitte mono o shiru*. “If we just stare at a blank piece of paper thinking, ‘I need to write,’ we will never write but as we start writing, we get to know our creation in the process of production,” explained Heisig.

Saitō wrapped up the discussion by asking Peters how, in his opinion, Barthes’s understanding of subjectivity was fundamentally different from that of Nishida’s. “For Barthes, the central idea is a death of the author which produces the birth of the reader,” explained Saitō, “and in Western philosophy, the death of the author is linked to the death of God as much as the birth of the reader is linked to the birth of man (human). In this sense, writing and reading are two different processes. When we want to write something about a certain text, we take the previous text as a locus but we end up creating a completely new text. At this very moment when we have an itch to write something new on the basis of something old, we experience the death of the author (the previous author of the previous text had died) and the birth of the new reader (we are birthing an entirely new text). Our own subjectivity arises *in the process of reading*, when we have an urge to write, the birth of the reader is a counter-response to the death of the author. So, how is Barthes’s model different from that of Nishida? Are not they completely the same?”

Peters responded that while Barthes’s and Nishida’s models are theoretically similar, it is fair to say that one important way they differ is that Nishida’s notion of the “self-determination of the absolute present” brings out important temporal dimensions that are left out in Barthes’s analysis, and can help us think further about artistic production and reception.

In the end, Abe reminded the discussants that one of the most important aspects of Nishida's subjectivist philosophy is its Zen Buddhist roots and the fundamental Buddhist ideas of absolute nothingness and self-elimination. "We cannot begin to appreciate Nishida's interpretation of 'the self' without referring to the notion of *jiko hitei* (self-negation)," concluded Abe.

Concluding discussion

First, Okuyama gave the floor to the young graduate students who took turns giving short speeches of appreciation reflecting on what they had learnt during the past two days and expressing their gratitude to the commentators, the participants, and to Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture for this special opportunity to present at the Second Nanzan Seminar for the Study of Japanese Religions.

Next, the commentators shared their impressions about the Seminar and highlighted the most interesting trends that they could trace during the discussions. All participants agreed that the Seminar was a great success for several reasons: (1) a very high level of preparation and deliverance of presentations by the graduate students (both content-wise and in terms of Japanese ability); (2) a clear sense of academic parameters and analytical frameworks ("modern Japanese Buddhism"; "cultural mimesis," "transnational history," "translocative analysis," and so forth), and (3) excellent time management skills by presenters, commentators, and discussants (45 minute presentations followed by 45 minute discussions).

One thing that all commentators and participants agreed upon was the importance of working across the borders: geographic, academic, and cultural. They also pointed out that the study of Japanese religions (Buddhism in particular) should be done within the paradigm of the "golden triangle": India-China-Japan. The present Seminar was a great success because it felt truly trans-border or transnational and it manifested a strong sense of historical and cultural coherence in the analysis of Japanese Buddhism.

In the end, Okuyama remarked that the Nanzan Seminar for the Study of Japanese Religions provides a special opportunity for the international graduate students to give comprehensive presentations and discuss their research in Japanese language. While Japanese graduate students have many chances to give their presentations in English at international conferences, there are few (if any) opportunities for international students to give their presentations in Japanese. Okuyama expressed hope that the Seminar will blossom in the future and attract many brilliant young scholars to the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture.