

NCC Study Center Activities 2004

Lectures and Seminars

The *research group* on “Funerals, ceremonies for deceased, ancestor veneration” organized the following lectures: Prof. em. ISHII Masami (Lutheran Theological Seminary, Tokyo) reported about “The Funeral liturgical texts of the [Japanese] Lutheran Church” on March 3, 2004, and Rev. YOSHIDA Masato (Director of Williams Theological Seminary, Kyoto) on “The Funeral Liturgy of the [Japanese] Anglican Church” on June 4. In the *Public Lecture Series* on “Christianity and Funerals,” Prof. em. MIZUGAKI Wataru (Kyoto University) gave a presentation on “The beginnings of Christian funerals in the early church,” and Dr. HIGASHIBABA Ikuo (Tenri University) on “The beginnings of Christian funerals in Japan: Kirishitan mission and funerals” on Nov. 19. On Dec. 3, Prof. HINONISHI Shinjo (Koya-san University) gave a lecture on “Funeral customs in Japan – Ethnology of funerals and graves,” which was followed by a panel discussion with the aim to reflect on Christian funeral practices in Japan.

At the occasion of the publication of the Aum book (see below), together with Tomisaka Christian Center (Tokyo) the NCC Study Center organized *public lectures* on June 12 by Prof. NODA Masaaki (Kwansei Gakuin University, Nishinomiya) on “Who are we who gave birth to Aum Shinrikyo, and fear it?” and by Ms. EGAWA Shoko (journalist, Tokyo) about “My research notes.” The *Special Lecture* of the “Interreligious Studies in Japan Program” (ISJP, fall semester 2004) was held Nov. 5 by Prof. TERAZONO (Seinan University) on the theme “Possibilities of a ‘Japanese Theology’? – The case of Takizawa and Ebina.” *Lectures in English* were held by two visiting researchers from Germany: Prof. Dr. Jörg Dierken (Hamburg University) gave a presentation on “Religion and negativity in East and West (especially the Kyoto School of Philosophy)” on May 7, and his wife Dr. Angelika Dörfler-Dierken (Bundeswehr Institute for Social Research, Germany) lectured on “Bushido and its fascination among young officers in the German Army” on May 11.

The NCC Study Center’s *Annual Seminar* took place at the Shinogamo Shrine in Kyoto August 6-7 and had the theme “The *nagoshi jinji* (overcoming the summer heat) ritual at Shimogamo Shrine.” The *regular study group* on the *Hannya Shingyo* (Heart Sutra) under the guidance of the staff member Rev. MATSUDA Fuhito (Shingon priest) was continued and completed during the current year.

Participation in Conferences and Meetings

In May, Prof. Yuki gave a presentation on the “Tenno System” in the Nijijima Society (Doshisha University). In October, he lectured on “Christianity in Kyoto since the Meiji Period” in the Anglican Church (Kyoto). In January, Dr. Martin Repp gave a presentation on “Religious Disputations in the history of Buddhism and

Christianity – Some lessons for contemporary interreligious dialogue” at the Center of Excellence (COE) at Kyoto University, Faculty of Letters. In March, he lectured on “Possibilities of interreligious dialogue between Buddhists and Christians” for Obaku-shu priests in Mampuku-ji (Uji). He also gave a talk on “Namban priests and Miyako’s Kirishitan” at the Anglican Church (Kyoto) in October.

In May, Prof. Yuki attended the EGSID (Ecumenical Group for the Study of Interreligious Dialogue) meeting at the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture (Nagoya). The Group of research institutes affiliated with religious organizations met in October in Kyoto, hosted by Shinshu Otani-ha. In December, the 51th CORMOS (Conference of Religion and Modern Society) meeting was held in Kyoto on the theme “Emotion and spirituality.”

Publications

In cooperation with the Tomisaka Christian Center, the NCC Study Center published the results of the interdisciplinary research project on Aum Shinrikyo in Japanese: Eds., NCC Shukyo Kenkyu-sho & Tomisaka Kirisuto-kyo Center: *Anata wa donna shugyo o shita no desuka? – Oumu kara no toi, oumu e no toi* [Which religious practice did you perform? – Questions from Aum, questions towards Aum]. Shinkyō Shuppansha, Tokyo 2004.

Japanese Religions Vol. 29 Nos. 1 & 2 was published as a special issue on Meiji Christianity. Prof. Elizabeth A. Dorn served as guest editor. *Deai* (Encounter) Vol. 14 No. 3 was published in April and contains contributions on the Emperor System, the Imperial Rescript for Education, and ancestor veneration in Japan. The NCC Study Center’s researcher Mr. INOUE Shozo published a book on the theology of Christian funerals in Japan under the title *Kokoro ni nokoro kirisutokyo no osobiki to wa – Sogi no shingaku josetsu* (Shinkyō Shuppansha, 2005). Martin Repp published a book on Honen’s religious thinking with the title *Honens religiöses Denken – Eine Untersuchung zu Strukturen religiöser Erneuerung* (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005)

Personnel and Visiting Researchers

As of March 31, Prof. YUKI Hideo retired as Director of the NCC Study Center. He had become director in 1985 as successor of Prof. DOI Masatoshi. During his 19 years of directorship, he contributed significantly to deepen trustful relationships with representatives of many religions in Japan and to increase the NCC Study Center’s international recognition. Rev. ISHII Mitsuo, chairman of the Board of Trustees, became acting Director until a successor is found. After completing his term as Associate Director, Dr. Christian Hermansen became a Lutheran missionary and assistant professor at the School for Law and Politics of Kwansai Gakuin University (Nishinomiya). Dr. Martin Repp became professor for Comparative Religious and Christian Studies at Ryukoku University (Dept. of Shinshu Studies, Graduate School; Kyoto). The Board of Trustees appointed him as Associate Director and asked him to continue his work as Coordinator of ISJP, both on a voluntary basis.

Two new members, Mr. INOUE Shōzō and Dr. AWAZUHARA Atsushi joined the

NCC Study Center's staff. Dr. Awazuhara graduated from Doshisha University, School of Theology (M.A.), and received recently his doctorate in the field of Mythological Studies with Emphasis on Depth Psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute (USA). The theme of his dissertation is "Beauty Never Dies – Images of Para-Reality in Japan." Mr. Inoue, a retired banker of Sanwa Bank (Yokohama), holds an M.A. from Doshisha University, School of Theology, Kyoto. The theme of his thesis is "The mechanism of enculturation in Japanese Christian funeral services." He also attended the Graduate School of Rikkyo University, Tokyo, and continues his research on problems of enculturation of Christianity in Japan, especially in respect to Christian funeral services.

From March 16 to May 16, the Study Center received Prof. Dr. Jörg Dierken (Hamburg University, Theological Faculty) and his wife PD Dr. Angelika Dörfler-Dierken (Institute for Social Research of the German Army, Strausberg) as visiting scholars. Prof. Dierken pursued research on "Religion and negativity in East and West, especially in respect to the Kyoto School of Philosophy," and Dr. Dierken-Dörfler did her research on "Samurai and the popularity of samurai ethics (*bushido*) in Western countries." Dr. Franz Winter (Vienna University, Religious Studies Dept.) pursued research on "The use of occidental myths in Kofuku no Kagaku" from October 16 to December 9. He gave also a lecture on this topic for the ISJP students.

Visitors

Among the visitor of the NCC Study Center were the following persons: Rev. Stephan Jäger, Prof. Dr. Mohsin Kadivar (Tarviyat Mudaris University, Iran), Rev. Dr. Kubik and members of the (Protestant community) Koinonia, Dr. Preisinger (German Consul from Osaka/Kobe), Rev. Rita Schaab (Germany), Prof. Dr. Henk Vroom (Free University, Amsterdam), and Dr. Christal Whelan.

For more comprehensive and updated informations on the NCC Study Center's activities, publications and the ISJP, please visit our new homepage: www.japanese-religions.jp.

Martin Repp
Associate Director

ISJP Report of the 4. Semester (Fall 2004)

1. Participants

The regular students of the fall 2004 semester were Ms. Christiane Banse (student of theology, Tübingen University), Mr. Martin Engels (student of theology, Heidelberg University), Ms. Verena Kuttich (student of Religious Education (Religionspädagogik), Nürnberg University), and Mr. Philipp von Stockhausen (student of theology, Göttingen University).