

## Recent American Doctoral Studies of Japanese Thought

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### Abstract

This study surveys the past decade of American doctorates in Japanese religion and philosophy, and proposes areas worthy of further research. The survey covers 62 doctoral dissertations relating to Japanese religion and philosophy during the decade 1979-1988. These dissertations were classifiable into four "streams" of thought, viz., Buddhist, Confucian, Christian, and Shinto. They are analyzed in terms of: (1) subjects of study, (2) year of submission, (3) academic department, and (4) other trends. In contrast to the 1970's, when dissertations about Zen-related subjects were more common, recent years have seen more attention paid to Shingon, Jodo-Shinshu, and Nichiren-related sects. Dissertations on classical thought are giving way to more contemporary concerns; and there remain major gaps in the thought of the early analyzed period. Dissertations purely on the role of a thinker in history are slowly yielding to dissertations about philosophy as expressed in art, literature, music, and festivals, concomitant with a rise in women writers of dissertations.

The latter section of the paper proposes some areas in which Japanese thought may potentially contribute to western philosophical problems, in particular: (1) logic and linguistic analysis, (2) continental philosophy, (3) holistic cosmology, and (4) revitalized Buddhist philosophy.

### Preface

The boundary between religion and philosophy is a relatively new and artificial one. In classical terms, it would be

foolish to call Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, or even Santayana a philosopher but not a religious scholar. In Japan, the words religion and philosophy were hardly known until Nishi Amane introduced them as translations of German academic terms. In the fields of Buddhist, Confucian, and comparative East-West Studies, the philosophy-religion boundary is also somewhat unnecessary. Fortunately, most departments of religion recognize this, and allow their students to do philosophical as well as religious studies. Less fortunately, many philosophy departments tend to be more disciplinarily minded, discouraging work on topics they consider "purely religious" such as cosmology, metaphysics, or cultural world-views. This is largely a result of the compartmentalization and divisions which have arisen within western academic philosophy in the past half century. In this article, however, considering Western studies of Japanese thought, we shall embrace both religion and philosophy proper, and also a small range of studies not conducted under the auspices of philosophy or religion departments, but which have Japanese intellectual history or thought as their primary concern. Herein, we shall attempt two things: First we shall look at the kind of work which is being done in America recently, to see in what areas it is being done, what developments are promising, and what needs for improvement remain. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, we shall suggest some important

ways in which studies of Japanese religion and philosophy might creatively nourish present Western thought.

## **I Survey of American Dissertations Related to Japanese Thought**

Unlike Greek, German, or even Anglo-American philosophy, Japanese philosophy lacks clearly defined classical origins and unified problematics. It is not that there is a mainstream of Japanese thought which is fixedly working at certain theoretical problems such as (in the Mediterranean West) the nature of substance, the nature of mind, or the ontological compositions of the world. Rather, Japanese thought exhibits parallel and sometimes confluent streams of thinking on a variety of philosophical problems. Some of these might be considered more literary, aesthetic, political, or religious than philosophical, by someone steeped in a strictly Western definition of philosophy. Yet it is undeniable that Japanese thought is as seriously concerned with—and finds as much "cosmic" or "existential" significance in—problems of the way a garden design reflects the universe, as the Western tradition has been with formulating valid syllogisms or proofs of God's existence. This makes the surveying of American dissertations on Japanese thought slightly problematic, in the sense that not all dissertations on Japanese thought emerge from

departments of religion and philosophy alone—and even those that do often have heavily literary or aesthetic overtones. It is with a full awareness of this initial gap between Japanese and American definitions of what constitutes "Japanese thought," that this survey is undertaken.

For the purposes of this study, the files of DAI (Dissertation Abstracts International) were surveyed, first manually, and subsequently by computer, for the decade 1979-1988. The searches were not limited to those dissertations produced within philosophy departments, but covered the entire gamut of humanities dissertations. Whenever possible (in about 1/3 of the included cases, and in a number of cases ultimately eliminated as being too far from philosophy or intellectual history), the original dissertations as well as the abstracts were read and judged for their relevance to a history of Japanese religious or philosophical thought. This produced a "data base" of 62 dissertations (see Appendix I), which could then be studied for a number of variables.

These dissertations were found to be loosely classifiable into four "streams" of thought, viz., Buddhist, Confucian (especially of the "Yōmeigaku" school in the Tokugawa Period), Christian, and "Other," (a term chosen in preference to "Shinto," that ill-defined moniker for all that is native to the Japanese mind but not necessarily encoded in texts and schools). In fact, it is perhaps

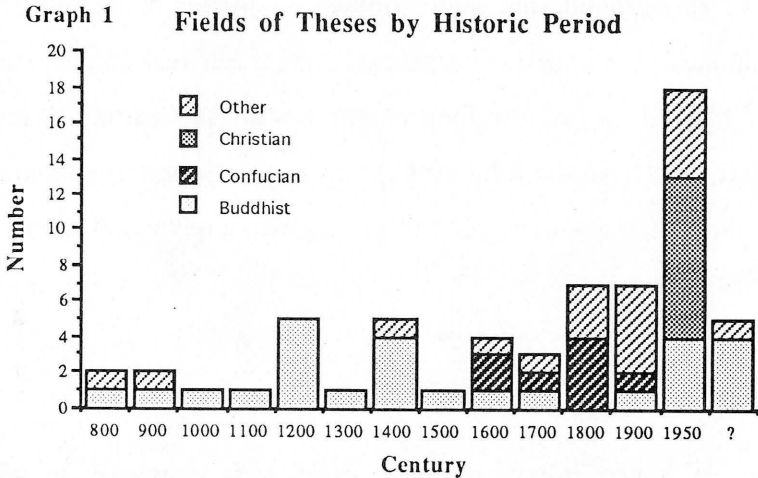


within this "other" category that things most genuinely Japanese may be discovered; things less influenced by the foreign "incursions" of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity. It is of course recognized that some important pieces may have been overlooked in this selection process, either because they were not listed in DAI, or because their abstracts were misleading in one or more respects. So the following descriptions are not intended to be exhaustive and absolute, but rather suggestive of overall trends and tendencies.

### **(1) Periods of Study**

It is not always possible to identify precisely in which century a school of thought or text begins. But in the case of their doctoral dissertations, Ph.D candidates are generally encouraged to focus on a narrow and well-defined personage or problem, which tends to place them within a single lifetime or century. Insofar as possible, the 62 dissertations were first sorted by the central individuals or texts on which they center. There remained several dissertations which could not be so dated, either because their subjects were in some sense a-temporal, spanned too many periods to be classified, or simply failed to specify any period in their abstracts. With the recognition that no dissertation is *strictly* limited to a single century, the materials were still classified into a

chronological/philosophical matrix (see Appendix II: Dissertations by Period and Philosophical Content). This reveals several trends which can be observed even more clearly in Graph 1.



A number of interesting observations can be gleaned from Graph 1. Not surprisingly, Buddhism is most studied in the Kamakura period; Confucianism in the Tokugawa period, and Christian missions in the post-war period. What is more interesting is what is not shown; the gaps in doctoral study, if we may term them such. These items include serious gaps in the studies of:

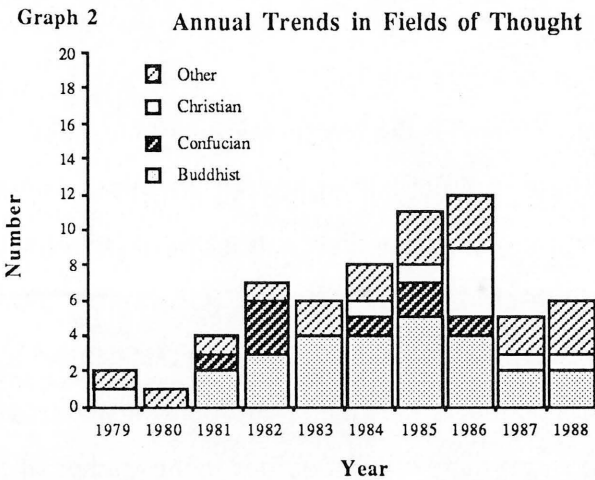
- (a) All intellectual thought prior to the Heian Period (ca. 800 AD)
- (b) Buddhism from 1500 through 1900
- (c) Christianity between its introduction in the 1500's and 1900
- (d) Shinto philosophy as represented in the Kogaku and Koku-gaku schools.

Now it may be argued that these gaps are indeed eras when philosophical thinking did not particularly flourish; either because it was forced underground, like the *kakure*-Christian movement of (c), or because the Tokugawa shogunate encouraged Buddhist priests to become civil servants rather than spiritual mentors in the Tokugawa period. Conversely, it may be precisely that philosophical/religious activity of the Japanese people in times of stress which illustrates the true nature of their world view.

If indeed "Shinto" is the key to genuinely Japanese thought, as many Japanese scholars continue to maintain, then it is particularly disturbing that few dissertations have been devoted to studying that which is truly Shinto. (Of course there are dissertations on the politics of State Shinto and its demise after the war, but these are political rather than philosophical studies.) Now it is understandable that there are difficulties in the studies of Shinto: there is not a single agreed *corpus* of material, a key text to which a scholar can turn to study, and even among serious Shinto scholars such as Hirata Atsutane (1766-1843) and Yanagida Kunio (1875-1962), it is sometimes hard to determine where philosophical concerns fade into folklore. Still, it would seem that this near-virgin territory is in need of more careful tilling, if we are to approach an understanding of the Japanese world-view outside of an externally-imposed vocabulary of Buddhism and Confucianism.

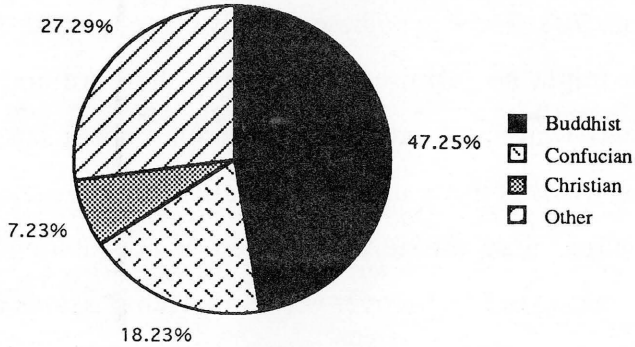
## (2) Year of Submission

Now, if we turn to observe the production of dissertations on these four fields of thought by their years of submission, some other interesting trends emerge, as can be seen in Graph 2.

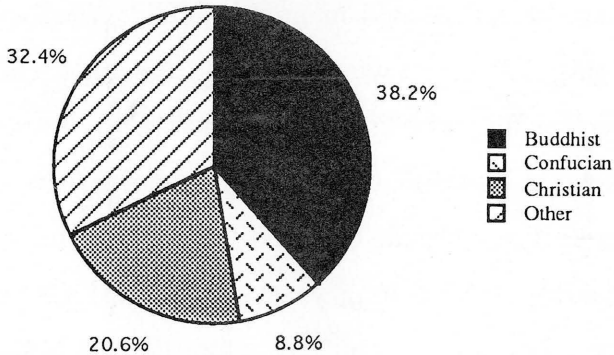


Graph 2 makes clear that Buddhist and "Other" (native Japanese thought) dissertations have enjoyed a relatively stable production rate, peaking in the 1985-6 period. By contrast, Confucian studies seemed to peak in the early '80's, and Christian (mostly missiological) studies in the late '80's. The following graphs make this comparison more visible (Graph 3).

Graph 3 **Fields of Thought, 1979-1984**



**Fields of Thought, 1985-1988**



It is painfully obvious that while there is little significant change in Buddhist and "Other" scholarship, Confucian studies have dropped to half of their early '80's level, replaced by Christian missiological studies, up almost three times from the early '80's. We may well inquire what accounts for this switch in student interest. Considering that the average Ph.D in Japanese studies requires some 8-10 years of study, we should ask not, what happened to

change students in the '80's, but rather, what happened to students in the late '70's. Three hypotheses readily come to mind:

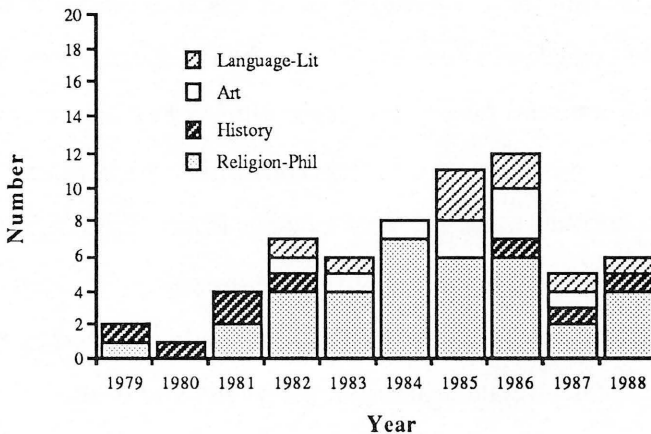
(1) It might be surmised that, during the Ford and Carter Eras, students were more interested in learning about Japan on its own terms, whereas in the more conservative Reagan era, students were becoming more missionary-minded—if not xenophobic, at least more concerned to discover why American missions to Japan were failing rather than to learn what Japan had to teach Western philosophers. (2) By the early '80's, it was widely felt that jobs in philosophy and related humanities fields were unavailable and declining. Therefore, would-be Neo-Confucian scholars may have abandoned this scholarship for some slightly more "employable" field, while would-be Christian missionaries were hoping for new opportunities abroad. (3) Neo-Confucian and early Buddhist scholarship require long years of classical Chinese as well as Japanese language training. By contrast, much of the missiological studies of Christianity in modern Japan can be completed in English, or be interviewing with an oral command of Japanese, without going back to more ancient sources. It may be that the trend seen in our graphs above reflects a declining interest and/or ability in philosophically-minded graduate students in learning classical foreign languages. Whatever the reasons, we may observe not only trends in Japanese thought, but trends in American graduate

education, through the analysis of this kind of data.

### (3) Major Disciplines in which Japanese Thought is Studied

As mentioned earlier, Japanese thought is not as unified a body of knowledge as say, Greek philosophy or German idealism. Although some 58% of dissertations primarily concerned with Japanese thought emerge from departments of religion and philosophy, the remaining 42% are almost equally divided between departments of history, art, and literature/linguistics. Here too, however, various trends can be observed over time, as in Graph 4 (cf. Appendix III).

Graph 4 Fields of Theses on Japanese Thought



How shall we analyze these data? To begin with, it seems

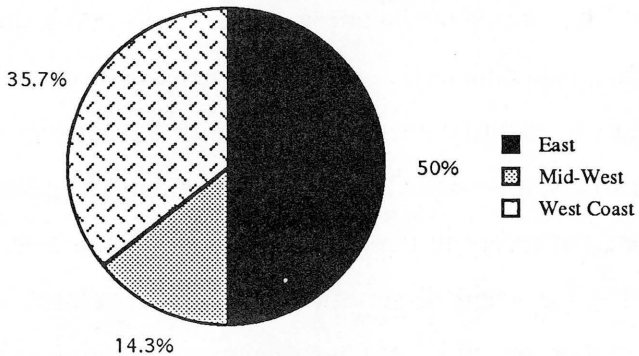
that studies in Japanese thought flourished more in the late '80's than in the early '80's. But when we look to individual fields, philosophically-related dissertations in history were proportionately commoner in the early 1980's, whereas in the later '80's, history has dwindled and given place to artistic and literary-related philosophical dissertations. The origins of these changes must again be sought, not in the year of graduation, but some five to ten years earlier. Is this too a reflection of the growing consciousness in the early Reagan period that historians faced a bleak employment prospect, while linguists could always hope to move into computer applications? Or is it a reflection of the growing number of women producing Ph.D's in the 1980's, whose interests tend more towards the artistic than towards the strictly historical/philosophical? A more careful technique of interviewing or of questionnaires would be necessary to completely answer this question, but the trends may be of interest to potential future scholars as well as to their advisors.

When we turn to the geographic regions of Ph.D production, another trend emerges as well. From Graph 5, it can be readily observed that the traditional dominance of East Coast institutions in oriental studies (which had already declined to 50% of all philosophically-related dissertations by the end of the '70's), has continued to decline in the 1980's. Mid-western production of dissertations (spearheaded by Michigan and Indiana, but defined to

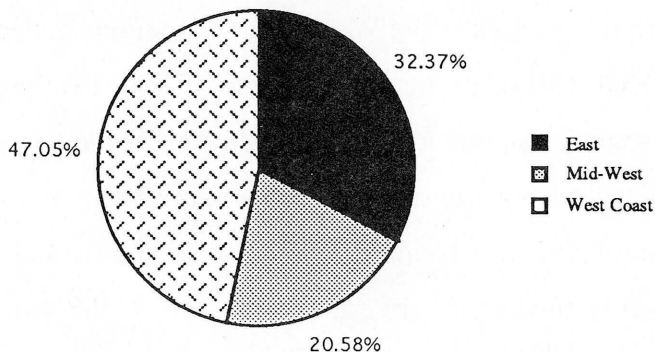


include territory from Ohio to the Rockies) rose by almost 50% during this period, while West Coast institutions traded place with the East Coast in occupying nearly half of the market of dissertations relating to Japanese thought. On the one hand, this is hardly surprising, considering the greater numbers of Americans of Japanese ancestry living in the western states, and the greater proximity of the western states to Japan. At the same time, one cannot help but wonder whether this represents some kind of decline of interest in Asian thought among the ivied halls of the east, as a generation of East Coast professors trained in Chinese and Japanese studies in the 1940's now begin to retire.

Graph 5      Regionality of Theses, 1979-84



### Regionality of Theses, 1985-88



#### (4) Further Discussion

Looking at the above, several interesting features are immediately apparent. In contrast to the 1950's and '60's, when most Ph.D work on Japanese thought was being done in the Ivy League, today, there is a very wide spread throughout the country. It is hard to identify one center of study for Japanese religion and philosophy, although California, Hawaii, and Michigan seem to be among the recent leaders. Looking at subject matter, in contrast to the 1970's, when dissertations about Zen-related subjects were commoner, recent years have seen more attention paid to Shingon, Jodo-Shinshu, and Nichiren-related sects. Dissertations on classical thought are giving way to more contemporary concerns; and there remain major gaps in the area of Neo-Confucian Japanese thought

in the Tokugawa period. Dissertations purely on the role of a thinker in history are slowly yielding to dissertations about philosophy as expressed in art, literature, music, and festivals, concomitant with a rise in women writers of dissertations. While the focus of many of these remains textual, an increasing number are concerned with ritual and experience: pilgrimages, alms-giving, statuary, chanting, teacher-client interactions, etc. Some are consciously concerned with the recent Buddhist-Christian dialogue; all seem concerned with creating structures of understanding whereby Westerners can better approach the Japanese world-view, ancient or modern.

The kind of research attempted above cannot claim to be exhaustive or complete, and emendations or contributions from readers would be very welcome. However, it demonstrates the kinds of information which can be gleaned from data-base bibliographic searching. It would be valuable as well as interesting to learn the employment records of the 62 doctorates who studied in fields related to Japanese thought. One cannot help but wonder how many are now advising dissertations of their own students, and in what fields. As well as acquainting our readership with the range of studies recently accomplished, it is hoped that the above research may serve as a spur to additional research in some of the fields which have been shown to be "under-explored."

## II Possibilities for Japanese Thought to Contribute to Western Thought

One thing that we can say about this entire collection of dissertations is that it is far smaller than the collection that exists for the same period about Japanese economics, sociology, business, and politics. This is representative not only of Japanese studies, but of religion and philosophy departments throughout the USA; they seem to be losing students and money to departments which deal on more "practical" levels with American-Japanese relations. However, there can be no question that along with the rest of American society, American universities are more concerned than ever before with Japanese issues. We might venture to hope, then, that this represents a special period; a chance for Japanese thought to be received and make contributions to western thought as never before.

One of the reasons that religion and philosophy departments are flourishing less today than they were twenty years ago, as intimated by earlier studies, is that philosophy itself is no longer making as significant contributions to national thought and policy as it once did. It has been suggested by some people that western philosophy, divided loosely into analytical and continental camps, has almost bankrupted itself of meaning and reduced philosophy to mere word-games. It is in this context that I see the new-old insights of Japanese thought as capable of infusing fresh blood into

western philosophy, and I dare to hope that at least some western philosopher-religion scholars are listening. There are at least four areas in which this might take place.

### **(1) Analytic Philosophy: Logic and Language**

While still strong in academic circles, it is widely becoming noticed that analytic philosophy of the traditional symbolic type has approached the limits of what it may be able to contribute to philosophy. It may have been an important antidote to the overblown metaphysical systems of the followers of Hegel at the turn of the century, and it did make some interesting discoveries about the differences between natural and mathematical languages. But analytic philosophy has already approached some of its theoretical limits. There is a growing recognition, both within and without the field, that the tools of linguistic analysis and mathematical language-models are not only culture-bound but inadequate to explain many of the more important uses of natural language, such as imagery, innuendo, and humor.

Meanwhile, there is a growing cultural awareness that the logic followed by Japanese language is seldom the same as that used by Russell and Frege. A generation ago, this might have led analysts to the cultural-imperialist generalization that the Japanese language were less logical than that of the West. Today, it is more

appropriate to try to seek the logic underlying Japanese thought and language, to try to unpack and explain it in its own terms. There are indications that western thinkers are moving in this direction.

In 1986, I wrote an article for the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* on the philosophical and cultural reasons why Japanese do not resort to rhetoric and public speaking the ways Anglo-Europeans do. Philosophically, it was a somewhat superficial piece, but it won the "Outstanding Article of the Year" award from the SIETAR intercultural research organization. Surely the reason for the award—what was good about the article—was that it enabled readers to understand that there are philosophical and historical reasons behind the Japanese behaving as they do. It is not the case that Japanese silence is "inscrutable;" and the reader of the article comes to an appreciation of the value of the Japanese view in its own right.

This willingness to appreciate a non-western philosophy on its own terms is a very hopeful sign. I only hope that better research can be done to follow up this openness. In particular, I see western linguistic philosophy approaching Japanese in a couple of areas: fuzzy set theory, and studies of metaphor. Classical western symbolic logic sorted the entire universe into sets and subsets, and everything was either to be included inside or outside of such sets. Recent logical theory has at last come to recognize what Japanese

thought has long understood: that language and sets have fuzzy boundaries, which change from context to context, speaker to speaker, perceiver to perceiver. Even given the same context and interlocutors, not all language can be exhaustively clarified—nor does it need to be. Not surprisingly, Japanese interest in fuzzy set theory is also booming, although it fails to recognize all of its methodological implications.

A similar limitation of linguistic philosophy has been seen in the area of imagery and metaphor, where it has become clear that symbolic logic is incapable of explaining the roles and varieties of words used as symbols or metaphors. Recently, study of symbol, imagery, and metaphor is growing in departments both of religion and philosophy. There seems to be a growing recognition that human thinking itself may be more inherently metaphorical than mathematical. This too is an area in which Japanese have long excelled. Japanese art, *haiku*, *waka*, even Japanese academic writing, used imagery and structure ideas in more intuitive but less mathematical forms than those used in western philosophical work. What is needed here is not for the Japanese to abandon their style of thinking to emulate some logician in the West, but rather to conscientiously examine and explain the processes which characterize their own traditional writing, speaking, and philosophy. I suggest that Japanese studies of imagery and metaphor may have

deep possibilities for western understanding of the same.

Western philosophy required an Aristotle and a Quine, Indian logic required a Dignaga, to unpack the workings of their own languages in their own terms. It is time that Japan produced some linguist/logicians capable of explaining the structure of Japanese logic in its own terms. In short, Japanese thought has a logic and a realm of imagery which is very rich but different from western logic, and if understood and developed, this might be of value to philosophers around the world.

## **(2) Continental Philosophy**

While the Anglo-American school of analytic philosophy has toiled in the increasingly barren fields of linguistic analysis, the continental philosophy has recently been characterized by the slightly more global concerns of the nature of the understanding of texts and of the ideal communication community; of what it is that makes communication of meanings possible, and how the communication of meanings affects the social and political human context in which that takes place. The best of the recent work of the Frankfurt school, of Jürgen Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel well exemplifies these concerns. Working out of the tradition of Husserl and Gadamer, they are reaching for explanations of how a



*horizontverschmelzung*—a converging of meanings and insights—is possible. Their intent is consciously globalistic and universalistic, not intended to be limited to the discourse-world of Indo-European languages.

However, these thinkers too have reached somewhat of an impasse here, both by criticisms from outside (e.g. Johann Galtung), and from within their own schools. Habermas' theory of the requisites for discourse has been challenged as being a too-European model, and recently he himself has begun to allude to the need for more non-European models of the universe of human interaction, focussing on the way communication is philosophically possible, and how that process affects its religious and political environments. Japan has long been famous for its success in dialogue, compromise, negotiation, group harmony, etc. This is now an area of experience which relates directly to the leading concerns of modern continental philosophy. It needs explaining in terms which make sense to the West, but which preserve the integrity of traditional Japanese thought and action.

Since continental philosophy today is inescapably political, this poses an opportunity for Japanese philosophy to utilize its greatest asset for human good. Counter to the Darwinian paradigm of competition and death to the less-than-superior, Japanese society itself represents and has much precedent for defending the paradigm

of cooperation; of helping even the "inferior" person, company, or group to find a meaningful way of cooperating with the society. In global terms, this may mean that the Japanese can play a leading part in intermediating the Buddhist-Christian dialogue, the Marxist-capitalist dialogue, the First-world-Third-world dialogue—or in any case, to maintain an interactive and ongoing dialogue working towards peace rather than a silent standoff leading to growing tensions. Of all the countries in the world, Japan finds itself in a unique position to take leadership towards nuclear disarmament and peace—to remind the world how tragic are the consequences of war in a nuclear age. Philosophically speaking, it has a unique tradition from which to unearth the methods and means of peaceful communication and negotiation. If Japanese thinkers can explain the nature and ground of cooperation from an Asian perspective, this would have immense philosophical interest to the leaders of continental philosophy, and at the same time have great potential value for the future of world harmony.

### **(3) A More Unified View of the Universe**

I believe it was LaPlace, but perhaps Lavoisier, who was asked by Napoleon how God fit into his understanding of the universe. His response was that he "had no need of such an hypothesis." The science of 1800 completely explained everything

in the universe, and no knowledge of invisible or undiscovered entities were needed. As we look back at the primitive French physics of the 18th century, we may laugh as we think of all the undiscovered aspects of the universe which are basic to our way of life today: electricity, X-rays, microwaves, short waves, etc. Yet the lesson has been lost on us, for we still tend to think that what has not been shown compatible with modern science must not exist. It is in pointing to some of the frontiers yet to be explored that Japanese philosophy can again open the eyes of the West.

The dualism which underlies the western view of the world, from Plato through Descartes, has been frequently criticized for the problems it creates for philosophers, not least of which is in the relations between apparently spatial entities (like bodies) and apparently non-spatial entities (like feelings and consciousness). The Far East, lacking such dualistic language and thought, has long held a more unified-field view of the nature of man and the universe. Eastern monism reduces neither to pure matter nor pure spirit, but sees matter and mind on a continuum of existence with a whole range of entities. Some Japanese philosophers, like Yasuo Yuasa and his disciples, have already begun to make important contributions to philosophy by giving a more Eastern and unified view of mind and body, which is gaining some favorable audience in the West.

There is much to suggest that the Japanese system of acupuncture and the philosophy of *ki*, or vital energy, has both great importance in medical treatment and the martial arts, and also has some fundamental insights about the nature of man and the universe from which western philosophy can learn and grow. In looking at the New Religions of Japan, the religious experiences of the Japanese people again cry out for a rethinking, not only of religion, but of the whole philosophical framework which would ignore their experiences as inconsequential. It is clear that the boom of New Religions in Japan is due not in small part to their ability to heal, to work miracles in the lives of their followers. This has happened far too many times, in far too well-documented situations, to dismiss them all as hoaxes or self-hypnosis. However, it is equally clear that the explanations given within these religions themselves cannot all be true, for some are incompatible with others.

The question, "what is it that enables miracles (or paranormal religious experiences) to occur," might be rephrased in the more philosophical way: what other investigations do we need to make in order to better understand the principles of the psychological universe, including the interactions of what the West would call "mind and matter?" Even without the help of the Japanese, the West is beginning to investigate questions of this order. I suggest that the Japanese traditions of worship, of

meditation, of pilgrimage, and of healing, could cast great light on this subject if properly examined.

#### **(4) Buddhism for the 21st Century**

This is an exciting age for the historian of religions, for it is an age in which Buddhism is moving from one culture to a very different one. Whenever Buddhism has moved, whether from India to Afghanistan, from China to Korea, Tibet, Mongolia, Vietnam, or Japan, it has always faced challenges of becoming meaningful to people in disparate socio-cultural contexts. Now, Buddhism is trying to move from Japan to America. In the process, it is facing the same tremendous linguistic and cultural challenges which it faced in earlier transitions in earlier centuries. Rather than fearing that Japanese Buddhism may be somehow "distorted" in the process, we should welcome the opportunities to find new richness of meanings within the deep traditions at our disposal.

One of the happiest and most meaningful aspects of my life in Hawaii was the fact that, like many professors of religion there, I was repeatedly asked by Buddhist congregations to lecture them on Buddhism. Compared to Japanese Buddhologists, American scholars know precious little about Buddhism. There were many Japanese priests in Hawaii better trained in Buddhist philosophy than myself. The problem was not that their English was

inadequate. The problem was that they were trained in Kyoto in practicing ancient rituals, and not in making sense of Buddhism for ordinary people in their everyday lives. Many Japanese temples have almost guaranteed incomes, which obviate the need for communicating the dharma, much less reasoning about it, to their parishioners. In America, people want Buddhism formulated in practical, applicable ways, which make people feel that the Buddhist tradition has living meaning in their work and play. If even Americans like myself can do such interpretations for the 20th century, how much better could this be done by real Buddhist scholars such as those in Japan. This is surely another area in which study of Japanese religion can move forward: in making old traditions meaningful for modern man, Japanese *and* Western.

New tools are now available for Japanese Buddhist scholars to use in revitalizing their tradition. A century of Christian scholarship, seeking after the historical Jesus and the original New Testament, has given us not only a new understanding of those eras, but has given us new methodologies for approaching any ancient written tradition. Redaction and literary criticism, and a new valuation of the meanings of myth in human experience, are but a few of the perspectives which deserve application to Buddhist texts. This too is an exciting new frontier of possibilities for the scholar of hermeneutics and comparative thought.

Advances in law, medicine, human relations, and an understanding of our environment cry out for analyses from a Buddhist or Japanese perspective. Neither the Bible nor the *Taisho Daizokyo* give any direct rules about what to do in situations of euthanasia, genetic engineering, terminal care, capital punishment, or environmental crises. Yet the sees and principles of intelligent decisions about such and future issues are already contained therein. It must be the job of present philosophers and religious scholars to find and better define those principles in terms which make them understandable, believable, and applicable to such modern problems. If we can do so, then the common man's faith in the wisdom of his own traditions will be rightfully reaffirmed, and rather than losing his tradition in a wasteland of alienated wandering, he may appreciate his affiliation with a wise basis for decision-making. Buddhism contains tremendous wisdom of immediate applicability to modern problems; specifically, its depth, situation-orientation, and focus on changing man's desires rather than changing the world, may prove superior in some ways to traditional western ways of rule-making in medical and environmental ethics. This too is an opportunity barely touched by scholars of Japanese thought, whether inside or outside of Japan. Significantly, conferences on such topics are proliferating, and hopefully this will be only the beginning of more widespread

attention paid to the relevance of Buddhism for problems of modern ethics.

## In Conclusion

We have noted a few areas in which Japanese thought is already being studied, and a few more in which the study is desperately needed. For better or worse, the attention which the West pays to Japan is closely related to Japan's economic progress. As China, Korea, and the "NICs" slowly erode Japan's economic superiority, there are reasons to fear that this attention may not last more than a generation, if it is not bolstered by some deeper-than-economic concerns. This is not the place to debate that question. Now *is* an opportune time to use this growing interest in America and Europe, to respond to the recognized demand for those who can understand both sides of the Pacific to some degree, by producing ideas and people who do that well and even philosophically. New media and newsletters, new travel and research opportunities, new means of communication, all make learning about Japan's traditional philosophies more possible than ever before for foreigners. At the same time, I venture to hope that the Japanese themselves will pick up on some of the themes mentioned above, in advancing the wisdom of the world by showing what Japan has



already known for a long time, without knowing she knew it. After all, is this not the job of the scholar of religion and philosophy?

(February 1991)

## Appendix I:

### Recent Dissertations on Japanese Thought

- Abiko, Bonnie F., "Watanabe Kazan: Artist Intellectual," 1982 (Princeton).
- Aizawa, Yoichi, "Almsgiving in the Fujū-Fuse Sect of Nichiren Buddhism," 1984 (Pennsylvania).
- Allan, Cheryl Marie, "Nichiren Buddhism and Roman Catholicism Confront Japanese Nationalism," 1988 (Hawaii).
- Anderson, George, "Buddhist Art and Mysticism in the Japanese Tea Ceremony," 1984 (California Institute for Integrated Studies).
- Barnhill, David Landis, "The Journey Itself Home: The Religiosity of Matsuo Bashō," 1986 (Stanford).
- Becker, Carl B., "Survival: Death and Afterlife in Christianity, Buddhism, and Modern Science," 1981 (Hawaii).
- Bender, Ross Lynn, "The Political Meaning of the Hachiman Cult in Medieval Japan," 1980 (Columbia).
- Boyle, Timothy Dale, "Communicating the Gospel in Japanese Terms at the Shintoku Kyodan Church," 1986 (Fuller).
- Brinkman, John Tivnan, "Simplicity: The Quality of Japanese Spirituality," 1988 (Fordham).
- Chang, Chia-Ning, "Theoretical Speculations and Literary Representations: Critics of Social Literature in the Meiji Interbellum," 1985 (Stanford).
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- Marra, Michele Ferruccio, "Aesthetics of Discontent: Power and Ideology in Japanese Literature," 1988 (UCLA).
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- Strong, Gary Wayne, "Information, Pattern, and Behavior in Four Japanese Groups," 1981 (Michigan).
- Stubbs, Vincent, "Presbyterian and Reformed Missions in Japan," 1984 (Fuller).
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- Watt, Paul Brooks, "Jiun Sonja: Life and Thought," 1982 (Columbia).
- Winter, Prescott Bowman, "Language, Thought, and Institutions in Tokugawa Japan," 1982 (Stanford).
- Wood, Don, "Eleven Faces of the Bodhisattva," 1986 (Kansas).

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- Yiengpruksawan, Melanie Hall, "Buddhist Sculpture of Chusonji," 1987 (UCLA).

## Appendix II

### Periods and Subjects of Doctoral Research

Period	Buddhist	Confucian	Christian	Other
Post-war	Shinshu Dialogue		Gospel	Women
Post-war	Soka-Gakkai		God	Shamanism
Post-war	Soka Gakkai		New Religions	Matsuri-Bayashi
Post-war	Tenri/Shinshu		Culture	Kokutai
Post-war			Hiroshima	Intellectual
Post-war			Leadership	
Post-war			Ministry	
Post-war			Adventists	
Post-war			Missions	
1900	Nichiren	Ogai		Space
1900	Buddhism			Kokutai
1900				Literary
1900				Nishida
1900				Shosetsu
1800		Kazan		Griffis
1800		Gennai		Chogyu
1800		Yomeigaku		Nyorai-kyo
1800		Yomeigaku		
1700	Jiun Sonja	Thought		Medicine
1600	Basho	Ekken		Kompira
1600		Jinsai/Sorai		

<b>Period</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>Confucian</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Other</b>
1500	Fuju-fuse			
1400	Zen Arch			<b>Zeami</b>
1400	Shinshu			
1400	Shinkei			
1400	Rennyō			
1300	Daitō			
1200	Jōdo			
1200	Ch'an			
1200	Myōe			
1200	Sanju-san Gendo			
1200	Buddhist Art			
1100	Jōdo			
1000	Chusonji			
0900	Tamenori			<b>Predication</b>
0800	Shingon			<b>Hachiman</b>
Undatable	Buddhist Art			<b>Gardens</b>
Undatable	Spirituality			
Undatable	Shingon			
Undatable	Saikoku			

### Appendix III

#### Dates and Fields of Doctoral Research

Date	Religion & Phil.	History	Art	Language
1988	Brinkman, John Tivan	Tamamoto, Masaru		Marra, Michele Ferruccio
1988	Hayashi, Minoru			
1988	Huh, Woo-Sung			
1988	Allan, Cheryl Marie			
1987	Shinmyo, Tadaomi	Yamamoto, Shoji	Yiengpruksawan, M. H.	Quinn, Charles Joseph
1987	Foulk, Theodore Griffith			
1986	Boyle, Timothy Dale	Devi, Shanti	Rugola, Patricia Frame	Marcus, Marvin Howard
1986	Fiske, James Arthur		Fujie, Lina Kiyu	Fenno, Shelley
1986	Ishihara, John		Wood, Don	
1986	Miyake-Stoner, Nobuko			
1986	Ogata, Mamoru Billy			
1986	Barnhill, David Landis			
1985	Payne, Richard Karl		Slawson, David A.	Chang, Chia-Ning
1985	Parks, Yoko Yamamoto		Coats, Bruce Arthur	Mito-Reed, Barbara E.

Date	Religion & Phil.	History	Art	Language
1985	Safu, Masayoshi			Delprat, Adriana
1985	Tachibana, Joanne			
1985	Tucker, Mary Evelyn			
1985	Todaro, Dale Allen			
1984	Aizawa, Yoichi		Anderson, George	
1984	Dobbins, James Carter			
1984	Kraft, Kenneth Lewis			
1984	Nefsky, Marilyn Felcher			
1984	Stubbs, Vincent			
1984	Takiguchi, Naoko			
1984	VanBremen, Jan Gerhard			
1983	Darling, Leonard Bruce, Jr.		Sano, Emily Joy	Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza
1983	Kim, Chong-Suh			
1983	Parker, Kenneth Wayne			
1983	Tanabe, George Joji, Jr.			
1982	Abiko, Bonnie F.	Winter, Prescott B.	Chang, Ching-Yu	Kamens, Edward Burt
1982	Rogers, Minor Lee			
1982	Song, Whi-Chil			
1982	Watt, Paul Brooks			



Date	Religion & Phil.	History	Art	Language
1981	Becker, Carl B.	Petralia, Randolph Spencer		
1981	Strong, Gary Wayne	Yamashita, Samuel Hideo		
1980		Bender, Ross Lynn		
1979	Kern, Edwin Christian	Ozaki, Norman Takeshi		