

REMEMBERING THE FIRST GENERATION



James W. Heisig and Paul L. Swanson

Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture

The following is a revised transcript of the oral presentation by James W. Heisig and Paul L. Swanson at the symposium “Believing and Thinking in an Age of Pluralism: The Search for New Modes of Expression,” held on 27 February 2026 to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture. The oral contents have been corrected and supplemented.

Matthew McMullen: Our program today consists of two sessions, a morning session and an afternoon session. The morning session will consist first of a talk from the professors emeriti at the Institute, James Heisig and Paul Swanson, who will talk about the history of the Institute.

So without further ado, I would like to introduce the president of Nanzan University, Robert Kisala, who will give some introductory remarks.

Robert Kisala: Good morning. I’m grateful for this opportunity to welcome all the participants to the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture Fiftieth Anniversary Symposium. The goal of the Nanzan Institute has always been believing and thinking in the age of pluralism, and in the search for new modes of expression. In this quest, the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture has contributed to the development of religious studies in Japan and around the world by holding research seminars, workshops, in-house seminars, and international conferences on interfaith dialogue and the dialogue between Japanese and Western philosophy. It has produced numerous publications and translation series on Japanese and world religions and philosophy, including the long-standing publication of journals such as the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* and *Interreligio*. It has attracted scores of leading scholars of religion from around the world and has become a venue for collaborative research. The NIRC has taken the initiative to accept visiting fellows from Japan and abroad and has attracted donations for the establishment of scholarship and lecture positions, such as the Van Bragt Chair

and the Roche Chair for Interreligious Research. Over the years, the permanent Research Fellows have received numerous awards for their publications and scholarship both within Japan and abroad, and the Institute has contributed to the international recognition of Nanzan University. The NIRC has been recognized as a leader in the dialogue among religions, within the Catholic Church, as well as by other leading religious practitioners.

I am proud to say that I was a member of the Institute for ten years, from 1995 to 2005, and it has played a foundational role in my own career as a religious researcher. This symposium is an opportunity to both look back on the contribution of the NIRC over the past fifty years, as well as to imagine the future of the Institute. I will close by expressing some of my hopes for the future. In this age of polarization, the cultivation of the spirit and skills for dialogue cannot be emphasized enough. Building on its long experience as a leader in promoting dialogue, I hope the Institute will continue to develop as a school for dialogue. I also hope that dialogue will extend to cultivating dialogue among the various academic disciplines, beginning with collaborative research with the other research institutes here at Nanzan University. In terms of specific research topics, the ethical use of AI is of pressing concern, and I hope that the NIRC will be able to make its own unique contribution to this dialogue as well. More than anything else, I hope that the Institute will continue to develop as a place for encounter for religious researchers and practitioners from Japan and abroad, a place to cultivate the values of human dignity, diversity, and dialogue. I pray for the success of this symposium and offer my congratulations for the fifty years of service, and my best wishes for the continued development of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture. Thank you.

Introductory remarks by Kim Seung Chul, former Director

Kim Seung Chul: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to welcome you. This is for me a privilege and a great honor to introduce my two senior colleagues here to you, James Heisig and Paul Swanson. They are surely well known to all of you, and some of you know them better than me, so my introduction will be very brief. First is James Heisig, who received his PhD from Cambridge University in 1973. He worked as a lecturer at graduate schools in Chicago and Mexico City, before moving to Japan in 1977, where he had the position of a permanent fellow at the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, as one of the founding members of NIRC. Sometimes I imagine that he was here at Nanzan even before the world was made. There are many things to say as an introduction, but in brief, he has published books in English, Spanish, Italian, and also in Japanese, and they were translated into even more languages worldwide. He served as director of the Institute from 1991 to 2001, following Jan van Bragt, the second director. Jim

received an honorary doctorate from the Tallinn University in Estonia in 2015. In 2021 he was awarded the Kanazawa University International Award in commemoration of D. T. Suzuki and Nishida Kitaro. And in 2023 he was awarded Japan's Order of the Sacred Treasure.

Paul Swanson did his graduate studies at Sophia University, the University of Tokyo, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He came to Nanzan in 1986, serving as the editor of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, the academic journal published by NIRC, and I'm very proud to say that this journal is considered as a gateway to success for scholars publishing on Japanese religions. Besides his work as an editor, his area of specialization was Japanese religions and Buddhist studies, especially Chinese texts. He also served as director for many years (2001–2010). Among many contributions and various publications, I want to mention *Clear Serenity, Quiet Insight*, which is a translation of the *Mohezhiguan* (Jp. *Makashikan*) in three volumes, for which he was awarded the 2019 Toshihide Numata Book Prize.

Both Jim and Paul were Roche Chair holders at NIRC, which was made possible by the generous donation from Mr. Robert Roche and the Roche Family Foundation.

This is just a short introduction. Now, I want to ask Jim and Paul to tell us about the fifty years of the history of NIRC, which was enabled by and reflected in their own contributions.

Paul Swanson (PLS): Okay, I'll start out. Thank you all for coming. We will be covering the early period that Jim and I were here at the Institute, so we may give short shrift to the last ten or twenty years, focusing instead on the first thirty-four years, remembering the first generation. My notes say that we hope we can be here for the seventy-fifth anniversary celebration, so we can hear the tales of the second generation, but I will be happy if I am still around for the sixtieth anniversary.

As I look around at the audience, I see so many (I hate to say) old faces, but many of whom will appear in pictures as much younger in our presentation. We will be presenting mostly in English, but, if something comes up that you want to ask and say stop, can you tell us more about this or that? And comments or questions in Japanese is also fine.

James Heisig (JWH): We'll be talking spontaneously off the slides and our thinking is that even if we have a half hour at the end for questions, they will have lost the context by that time: So if you have questions please feel free to interrupt and ask, as Paul said, in any language you're familiar with—except Flemish and Russian.

Let me say something about the beginning of the Institute. Soon after becoming president of Nanzan University in 1972, Johannes Hirschmeier began to dream of forming an institute at a Catholic university for dialogue with the

philosophy and religions of Japan and Asia. The inspiration of this came in the aftermath of the Vatican Council, which took a more open attitude to the reality of religious pluralism.

As a member of a religious missionary order, he understood that conversion from one religious establishment to another was not as important as sharing the ideals of one's own Christian belief as widely as possible. The mood in the Catholic Church had shifted to a greater interest in the teachings and practices of religions traditionally considered an open market for religious conversion to Christianity. He felt that this mood required a proper theoretical background, grounded in high academic standards. Hence his dream of the Institute, towards whose realization he quickly began to raise funds.

At the time, it seemed to most of the Nanzan University establishment that building such an Institute would not succeed without graduate programs in philosophy and religion, and that the whole idea was ill-conceived, like beginning a building with the roof. As a result, the project was removed from the University and put under the control of the Nanzan School Corporation.

Shortly after groundbreaking, I was invited for a consultation on the structure and workings of the Institute. At the time I was dividing my time between teaching at graduate schools in Chicago and Mexico City. I had already decided against an academic career that would involve tenure at any particular institution. I was young and idealistic, and had seen enough of academic politics and mad professors during my years in Europe. At the time, the adjunct professorships I enjoyed seemed perfectly suited to my hopes of teaching and doing research on the borderlands between philosophy and religion.

I was thrilled with the idea of visiting Japan and flattered that I would be able to join others in a discussion about the shape such an Institute might take. When I arrived, I immediately went to the president's office to inquire about the consultation. After a cup of tea, President Hirschmeier took me for a walk to the corner of the campus where the Institute was to stand. There was nothing more than a large hole in the ground. He asked me, if I were to imagine my ideal research institute, what would it look like? I thought to myself, well, everyone is going to be more guarded at the formal meeting, so this is my chance to speak frankly. I talked about institutes I had visited in Europe and shared my experiences in South America, and also that many of them had failed to create a true community of scholars, instead gathering together a collection of first-rate scholars, each of whom was doing his or her own research. I recommended, therefore, that he begin not with well-established scholars who already had their own careers and interests, but find younger scholars who are willing to pioneer the field. If the time was right, and if they were devoted to it, I was convinced the idea would succeed. Also, I said, it's important not to burden them with pre-established

goals and tasks. They should be allowed to find their way in uncharted territory. And then, since I was in Japan, I thought I'd better say something suitably Oriental. On the plane over I had been reading Zhuang Zhou's *Inner Chapters* and one image in particular came to mind. The Institute, I said, should be like a teacup. The teacup itself is useless. Its purpose is the emptiness that it creates for something to happen.

That seemed a sufficiently wise thing to say at the end of my remarks. "Okay," he said, took me back to his office. After another cup of tea and a little small talk, he handed me an envelope with some money and suggested that I return to Tokyo, visit some museums and take in a kabuki show before heading back home. I left his office embarrassed. It seemed to me that I had spoken so foolishly that I would not even be invited to attend the consultation with other scholars from around the world.

A few months later he wrote me a letter saying that the teacup was finished and would I like to join him in a cup of tea. He was inviting me to help found the Institute. Only years later, actually at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Institute, did I hear from one of his vice presidents, Nagasaka Genichirō, that in fact there had been no formal meeting, and that he had invited individual scholars one by one to stand in front of the same hole and tell him what they saw. The others were much more reasonable than I, speaking of the need for established scholars, a good library, for an academic journal, for electric typewriters in all the rooms and so forth. But for some reason, he chose me.

While he was raising funds and searching for an acting director, the president asked Heinrich Dumoulin to be the face of the Institute until a suitable candidate could be found, knowing that he had retired and would never be coming



Architect's drawing of the Nanzan Institute

down to the Institute to direct its activities. Meantime, the two of them were looking for someone to serve as the first director. By the time the buildings were completed, they had found what they were looking for in the person of Jan Van Bragt. I might note here that Professor Dumoulin later told me that during the search, while he was shaving one morning, he looked in the mirror and suddenly saw the face of Jan Van Bragt. President Hirschmeier agreed and made the proposal at once. At the time, Jan was the provincial of the CICM order in Japan and jumped at the chance to return to academic life. The order generously backed him up and in no time he had relocated to Nagoya to assume his new post. But he was so much more than director. Until his retirement in 1996, he was the *soul* of the Institute. His presence gave us stability and a steadfast focus on our purpose, all the while protecting us from being used by church groups and academic groups and government groups for their own agenda.

To further bolster the ideals of the Institute, President Hirschmeier agreed that it would be a good idea to build a family style home to house visitors, young researchers, and others connected to its work. The Paulus Heim was built in 1977 and five of us immediately took up residence. The hundreds of scholars who have stayed with us over the years are testimony to his foresight.

PLS: As you just heard, Jim was here from the very beginning. I didn't join the Institute until 1986, ten years after the founding, and so I was kind of a young outlier, but happily was quickly accepted as part of the community here. I first came as the associate editor, not as a permanent fellow. At the time, I worked on editing and publishing the journals and various publications from both the Nanzan Institute and the Anthropology Institute, and I immediately, to the detriment of other parts of my job, focused mostly on the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. At the time, Jan Swyngedouw was the editor of the *JJRS*. He was an excellent proofreader, and with wide knowledge in the sociology of religion, but he kind of let me take over, and I was happy to do so. After four years, as I heard later, there were discussions at the Paulus Heim saying, how can we get Paul to stay for the long term? And Jan Swyngedouw very graciously volunteered to resign his permanent position at the Institute and move to a teaching position at Nanzan. He was a great teacher, always able to spontaneously give an exciting lecture despite little or no formal preparation. By the way, at the time the members of the Institute did very little teaching and were able to concentrate on the responsibilities of the Institute. In any case, Swyngedouw volunteered to give up his position so I could shift over and become a permanent member, and also the editor of the *JJRS*.

Jim talked about the importance of being a community, but it wasn't just a community of a few permanent scholars. The office staff were very important, as were the many visiting scholars constantly coming and going. We worked very



closely with the staff and everyone who was involved in the Institute. We used to have tea time at 3:30 every day that would often go on to 4:00 or even 4:30, which served as a very comfortable opportunity to discuss things that needed to be done at the Institute. And we also had this ongoing tradition of garden parties at the Paulus Heim. And this was great because it involved not only the people working at the Institute, but they would bring their children and their families. I have many great memories of these garden parties, and this illustrates the importance of the wide network that was created at the Institute that included the staff, the secretaries, the temporary visitors, lots of people coming in and out.

Next I'd like to recall the early members of the "first generation" of permanent fellows. Starting from the top, we have already mentioned the "founding fathers" trifecta of Jan Van Bragt, Jan Swyngedouw, and James Heisig. Nagakura Hisako, an early member of the Institute, very quickly shifted over to the Nanzan faculty. As we swing around the circle a bit more, we see that gradually people were



Keta Masako



Ota Yoshiko



Ōtani Eiichi



Sulak Sivaraksa



Awazu Kenta



Erin McCarthy



Jeanine Sawada



Saitō Takashi

added, Watanabe Manabu and myself joined the Institute at about the same time. As Robert Kisala mentioned in his opening comments, he was a permanent fellow at the Institute for about ten years. Unfortunately (for us), he did not stay longer. We were sorry to see him go, but he went on his own way to (perhaps) greener pastures. Okuyama Michiaki was with us for a long time, but he retired early from the Institute and is now working in Tokyo. He was very also active in, as we will see later, many of the Institute publications and research activities in Japanese. Finally, I'm not sure he belongs with the "first" generation, but Kim Seung Chul joined and is still active as a permanent fellow of the Institute.

This is a quick roundup of the first generation of permanent members, but as I've mentioned already, there were also many people constantly coming in and out, whether for a year or two, or just a few days, weeks, or months. We've prepared a quick list of the postdoc fellows (see following page). It is important to note that from the very beginning, there was a system to support budding Japanese post-doc researchers to spend two years continuing their research before landing a more permanent job in academia (or elsewhere). The list contains the name of many people who have gone on to become influential figures in the world of Japanese religious studies, including Oda Yoshiko, Keta Masako (Kyoto University, president of the Japanese Academy of Religion), Horo Atsuhiko, and so forth. These were postdocs that came for usually two years right after they

Post-Doc Researcher Scholarships

瀨瀬康兵 (1976–1977)
 成河峰雄 (1977–1978)
 小田淑子 (1977–1978)
 小林一葵 (1978–1980)
 日野紹運 (1979–1981)
 赤松明彦 (1981–1982)
 井桁 碧 (1982–1984)
 氣多雅子 (1982–1984)
 土田友章 (1985–1986)
 川上光代 (1986–1988)
 木村登次 (1988–1990)
 保呂篤彦 (1991–1993)
 瀨上恭子 (1991–1993)
 奥山倫明 (1993–1995)
 小野寺郷 (1993–1995)
 梅澤弓子 (1995–1997)
 稲葉広由 (1996–1998)
 崔 賢民 (1998–2000)
 近藤光博 (1998–2000)
 岩本明美 (1999–2001)
 奥村浩基 (2000–2002)
 堀 雅彦 (2001–2003)
 長谷千代子 (2002–2004)
 山梨有希子 (2003–2005)
 山口亜紀 (2004–2006)
 川上恒雄 (2006–2008)
 大谷英一 (2005–2009)
 長澤壯平 (2008–2010)
 長澤志穂 (2010–2011)
 栗津賢太 (2009–2010)

Visiting Research Fellowships

Mathias EDER (1976–1980)
 Ansgar PAUS (1979)
 Gilbert HARDING (1979–1980)
 John BRINKMAN (1979–1980)
 John KEANE (1980)
 Hans WALDENFELS (1980)
 Frederick FRANCK (1981)
 Jay MCDANIEL (1981)

Gilbert L. JOHNSTON (1982, 1984)
 Wilhelm MÜLLER (1982–1983)
 William CENKNER (1983)
 Jean-Noel ROBERT (1984)
 Karel DOBBELAERE (1984)
 Whalen W. LAI (1984)
 Richard E. WENTZ (1985)
 Joseph O'LEARY (1986–1987)
 Winston L. KING (1985–1986)
 Lawrence SULLIVAN (1985–1986)
 Gerald B. COOKE (1986)
 Steve ODIN (1987–1988)
 Frank PODGORSKI (1988)
 YOSHIWARA Kazuo (1988–1989)
 Eugene ROOSENS (1989)
 Paul INGRAM (1989)
 Roger CORLESS (1991)
 Jan NATTIER (1991–1992)
 Jamie HUBBARD (1991–1992)
 Harrie VANDERSTAPPEN (1991–1992)
 Peter IGARASHI (1991–1992)
 Paul MOMMAERS (1992–1993)
 遊佐道子 (1993–1994)
 Paula ARAI (1998–1999)
 Janine A. SAWADA (1998–1999)
 高田信良 (2001–2002)
 Tiziano TOSOLINI (2001–2002)
 Jay FORD (2003)
 Donald ORR (2003)
 Scott SCHNELL (2003–2004)
 Gereon KOPF (2002–2004)
 Thomas KASULIS (2004, 2005)
 James W. JONES (2005)
 Philip VANHAELEMEERSCH (2005)
 Audrius BENARIUS (2006)

Keller KIMBROUGH (2005–2006, 2007, 2009)
 Paul ATKINS (2006)
 Joel BRADSHAW (2006)
 Christina HOFMANN (2006)
 Manfred HOFMANN (2006)
 Timothy W. RICHARDSON (2007)
 Charlotte EUBANKS (2005, 2007)
 Erin MCCARTHY (2006, 2007)
 John C. MARALDO (2005, 2007)
 Rafael SHOJI (2007–2008)
 John TUCKER (2007)
 Martin Lu 呂 武吉 (2007)
 Mark BLUM (2007)
 Victor S. HORI (1999–2000, 2008)
 Annwieke VROOM (2008, 2009)
 Andrea MOLLE (2006–2008)
 Aasulv LANDE (2009)
 Nikki BADO (2011)
 Eric WAITE (2011)
 Edward DROT'T (2012)
 Ricardo BAEZA (2012)

East-Asian Research Fellowships

李 完載 (1983–1984)
 南 基英 (1985–1986)
 Prachar HUTANAWATRA (1987–1988)
 Rosana TOSITRAKUL (1989)
 都 琬淳 (1990–1991)
 吉 熙星 (1990–1991)
 Sulak SIVARAKSA (1992–1993)
 梁 曉虹 (1994–1995)
 Antony FERNANDO (1995–1996)
 蘇 軍 (1996–1997)
 Pratoom ANGURAROHITA (1997–1998)
 金 承哲 (2001–2002)

finished their PhDs. We also had an almost endless stream of visiting research fellows. These were people who usually came with a grant or some independent support to come to Japan for some specific project. You see some of the big names there, including Mathias Eder, Frederick Frank, Jean-Noel Robert, Winston King,

to mention just a few, Larry Sullivan spent almost a year here working on editing the *Encyclopedia of Religion*. There's a picture here of Sulak Sivaraksa, who was a visitor many times. You may know him as a famous social activist from Thailand. One of his visits here was when he had to escape from Thailand because he was in danger of being arrested for *lèse-majesté*, so he left the country for a while and stayed with us. But those are just a few of the people that came, and we're very proud that many of these people came and contributed much to the international network that we developed as an institute.

JWH: For many years, Paul and I played basketball on Thursday afternoons with a group of foreign students at the University. With a job as sedentary as ours, we had to do something to keep body and soul together and in good health. One of the students who played with us, Robert Roche, became interested in the work of the Institute, and after he had completed his law degree and returned to Japan, where he set up the first company in the country for telemarketing which proved to be an enormous success.

And a few years later, he called me into his home and said that he would like to share his good fortune by supporting the Institute with a million dollar grant to honor people who have spent their lives doing work in religion and culture, philosophies East and West. The Roche Chair for Interreligious Research, as it came to be known, continues to this day. I'm sure many of you recognize some of the shining faces on the screen—including your own.

PLS: The Roche Chair was just part of our support for interreligious research and interreligious dialogue. One of the first series of projects to support interreligious dialogue was the so-called Nanzan Interreligious Symposia, which started almost as soon as the Institute started functioning. The picture on the facing page is from 1980, and you may recognize a number of faces, such as Nishitani Keiji. These were interreligious symposia that were academically focused, unlike many interreligious dialogues that were already going on, focusing on practice. You had Japanese monks going to Europe and spending time in Christian monasteries, and European or American monks coming and spending time in Japanese temples. We'll talk about that a bit more later. But these were, as pointed out, academically focused dialogues, not necessarily the best way to do interreligious dialogue, but it's one way, and that's what we focused on. These were intense and open discussions between representatives of various religious traditions. And it was interesting because there were some people who took part who were academics, but were also members of a certain religious tradition, say, Buddhist or Shinto or some new religious movement. There were other academics whose academic specialty was maybe Buddhism, but their personal religious tradition was different. So, you had a mix of people, sometimes representing their academic expertise, sometimes representing their own personal religious

position. That's where I kind of fit in, as a specialist in Tendai Buddhism, but with my background as a Protestant Christian. This brought together a very interesting mix of various opinions and expertise, on various aspects of religion, and how we could talk about matters without getting stuck in just one religious tradition. The contents of these symposia were eventually published. The very first symposium was on "Religious Experience and Language." The second one, basically members of the Kyoto School of philosophy, was on "Absolute Nothingness and God." And then you have symposia on Shinto, Esoteric Buddhism, Tendai Buddhism, and Pure Land Buddhism. And then the focus shifted to themes rather than individual traditions, so we had the symposium on "Religion and Culture," and on "Faith, Institutions, and Social Practice: Catholic and Soka Gakkai," which was a bit tricky putting together. We didn't know until the last minute whether the Soka Gakkai establishment would actually allow their people to take part in such a project, but it all worked out in the end.

And then we had this meeting on "What does Christianity have to learn from Buddhism?" hoping that other traditions would pick up the ball and discuss, say, what does Buddhism or Shinto have to learn from Christianity? Finally, we had a symposium on "Religion and Social Problems": this was around the time of the sarin attacks and the problem of Aum Shinrikyo and religious cults.

JWH: From the early years of the Institute, when we were not yet affiliated formally with the university, we were surprised again and again by the famous scholars who found their way to our door. We knew it was not because of anything the staff had done. The Institute had become a visible symbol of dialogue and the hope of change. And so people like Étienne Lamotte, Hans Küng, Fritz Buri, Frederick



Nanzan Interreligious Symposium 3 (1980)

Copleston, and Raimon Panikkar came one after the other to share their thoughts and make plans for collaboration. In time, the university realized that this could be an important asset to the growing, or the newly developed, graduate schools of philosophy and religion, and as a result invited us to incorporate.

It was our custom to invite visitors to participate in a program of colloquia, where a small group would sit around for an intense discussion on one or the other question of mutual interest. As you can see from the slide, these people came from all over the world. Figures like Sulak Sivaraksa, Ursula King, Ivan Illich, Nishitani Keiji, Gustavo Gutierrez, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, and the spiritual father of the Sandinista revolution Ernesto Cardinal. I count it as one of the great blessings of being at the Institute that we were able to sit down with these people for intense discussions and often host them for a few days at the Paulus Heim.

PLS: One of the best colloquia that we had was with Jane Goodall and, if I might add some background to this, we received a very handsome grant from the Templeton Foundation to conduct a two-year project (which was extended at a larger scale for an additional three years) on science and religion in Asia. The Templeton Foundation, as is well known, offers various means of support for the dialogue between science and religion. Around this time, about twenty years ago, they began to look outside of the United States and Europe. There was an awareness that until then, most Templeton Foundation grants that supported projects on “Science and Religion” were basically about science and Christianity, focusing on questions like evolution and the creation of the world, how does God the creator fit with modern science, and such questions that did not make much sense in the Asian context. So, I made a proposal to Templeton. We had welcomed a representative who came here with the idea that they wanted to expand the dialogue to the Asian context, and asked us what ideas do you have? And I thought, if I went to top-notch researchers in the hard scientists, like people at RIKEN, and say, “do you want to be involved in a dialogue about religion?” I figured this would be a counterproductive way to approach it, and it would lead to a lot of misunderstanding. Instead, I refocused the theme to “science and issues of the heart/mind (*kokoro no mondai*), and this became the focus of our project. I visited many places. I went to RIKEN and found two people who wanted to take part in the project. I went to the Primate Center in Inuyama, the Kyoto University Primate Research Center, and talked with the director there, Matsuzawa Tetsuro, who is famous for his work with chimpanzees.

JWH: And Paul won’t tell you this, but when he was there the director sat him down alongside Ai-chan, the female chimpanzee who had shown significant cognitive abilities (some superior to human beings), and her son. They were both seated in front of computers and given a test. A screen full of consecutive numbers flashed for a second and then were covered up. Each of them had to point to

the places where the numbers were in consecutive order. And the chimpanzee won every time!

PLS: She had more experience....

Anyway, because I had developed this relationship with the Director of the Primate Research Center, he became a link to Jane Goodall (who unfortunately passed away last year). Jane Goodall was a world traveler and was in the habit of coming to Japan every year. At that time



Jan Goodall addresses the Institute's "Science and *Kokoro*" project (2006)

Matsuzawa contacted me and said, "is it okay if Jane Goodall could be sponsored for a talk at Nanzan?" And I said, "Oh, is the pope Catholic?" But the problem was, at that time, Nanzan did not have the current large auditorium that holds 700 people; the biggest auditorium at the time was a place that held only 300 or 400 people. And Matsuzawa said, "Well, usually we expect 500 to 1,000 people to come to see Jane Goodall," but happily we ended up working it out, and it turned out to be one of the most successful and popular events in Nanzan history.

Jane Goodall's presentation was the most well-attended of our colloquia, but we had many other meetings, colloquia, and so forth, which were very exciting. As I said, there were many top-notch scientists who joined us, brain science specialists from RIKEN, and a robot specialist from Waseda University whose goal was to develop a robot that has a "kokoro" (heart or mind). I remember during these meetings he modified that statement and said, "I no longer want to build a robot, but develop (or "grow") a robot who will rebel against me. And if he rebels against me, then I know that I have succeeded." This also led to the publication of a number of books, one in Japanese on "Science, Kokoro, and Religion" (科学、こころ、宗教), and also in English on "Brain Science and Kokoro," which was the focus of the last three years of the project, which focused specifically on the implications of brain science and neuroscience.

We have also published many periodicals over the years. Some have discontinued, but many of them are still ongoing. The *JJRS* has been mentioned already, but we also published, first, an annual bulletin in English, which would report on the activities of the year, and then, with some overlapping content, a bulletin in Japanese; these are still ongoing.

I should talk about the background and history of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. This journal was originally published in Tokyo, for ten years as a journal called *Contemporary Religions in Japan*. David Reid was the editor, and then it was discontinued, but a few years later, David Reid revived the journal,

and instead of focusing just on contemporary religions he renamed it to *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* with a wider focus. After a few more years of David Reid's stewardship, with Jan Swyngedouw assisting him in Tokyo, but then Jan Swyngedouw coming to Nanzan and other factors made it increasingly difficult for David Reid to continue. He then approached Nanzan to see if we would take it over.

JWH: It was a certain Professor Ōishi Shūten 大石秀典, then head of the Federation of New Religious Organizations of Japan 新宗教連盟 who was charged with finding a home for the journal, a place that would be non-sectarian and academic. At the time, it had been in the hands of the Risshō Kōseikai, but they lacked adequate staff to carry on. When he came to Nanzan and asked us if we would take over the journal, we were flattered and enthusiastic. The following evening, we invited President Hirschmeier to supper and he gave his full support. I remember remarking, "Well, you know, we would need a copy editor, someone to edit our books and our journals, to make sure that they're ready for publication, and to keep our standards high. Otherwise..." "Okay," he interrupted. "We will create the position." And that he did. In fact, it was in that capacity that Paul Swanson first came to the Institute.

PLS: So, actually, I was the third copy editor, or associate editor [after Michael Kelsey and John Keenan]. And as I said before, I immediately grew into the position, as it were. And is this a good time to talk about desktop publishing?

JWH: Let's hold that for later.

PLS: Well, we could go on and on about working on the *JJRS* and other publications and the use of computers in desktop publishing, but I guess we will be discussing that more later.

JWH: Moving on to other publications, from 1977 until 2007, the Institute served as the headquarters for an association called the ecumenical group for the study of interreligious dialogue, or EGSID (which sounds more like something from a breakfast menu...). Twice a year members from the NCC center for the study of Japanese religions, the Orient Institute for Religious Research in Tokyo, the Institute for Oriental Religions in Sophia University, and the Nanzan Institute would meet to discuss their projects and see how we might help one another in our respective endeavors. This photo here actually shows a meeting we had with Cardinal Francis Arinze, who was in charge of the Secretariat for world religions at the time in the Vatican in 1992. I won't say much about his visit, except that he was none too happy with the Nanzan Institute for refusing to support Pope John Paul II's skepticism towards Buddhism and other religions. The Cardinal gathered the Institute staff and the heads of the other Institutes into the second-floor conference room upstairs where he addressed us directly. "I've called you



EGSID meets with Cardinal Arinze of the Pontifical Secretariat for Dialogue (1992)

here because I have a serious question for you. The Pope published an encyclical on prayer some time ago and it was translated into languages around the world, but there's still no Japanese translation. I want you to explain why, because it handles interreligious themes." Somebody spoke up politely, "Well, you know, the Pope's thinking is complex, and to put it into Japanese..." He wasn't having it and insisted on a straight answer. At last, Ishiwaki Yoshifusa, a fellow at the Institute, spoke up. "Actually, I'm the one who has been translating such documents these past many years. I have finished the translation. It's been on my desk now for over two years." "Why don't you publish it?" the Cardinal asked. "Because... because I love the church and want to protect it from embarrassing itself over its criticisms of prayer and meditation and religion in Japan in general. I just couldn't bring myself to put this out." To which the Cardinal replied, "Well, what will you do?" He smiled "I think I'll wait another year, until things have calmed down, and then we'll just print a small number of copies to distribute to a few libraries and parishes. And everything will blow over without confrontation or embarrassment."

So those are the EGSID meetings. But then, in 1982, we set up a meeting in Manila for directors from sixteen centers around Eastern Asia devoted to inter-religious work. At the time, most of these centers were unaware of the others. Their attention was focused mainly on Europe to establish contacts, organize projects, and secure funds. Discovering neighbors engaged in the same work was a turning point. We decided to establish a network called "Inter-Religio," for which the Nanzan Institute would serve as headquarters. We gathered the funds to finance the annual meetings at one of the centers and publish a bulletin twice a year, which was distributed around the world. As an offshoot of these meetings,

the Institute took over the publication of the annual Protestant journal, the *Japan Christian Review* for several years until it was discontinued. Inter-religio itself eventually disbanded in 2005, as it had served its purpose and several of the centers had closed down or been absorbed into other institutions.

Also, in 1982, Jan Van Bragt teamed up with the theologian Yagi Seiichi, the Zen monk Akizuki Ryōmin, and the theologian Doi Masatoshi to form a group called 東西宗教交流学会, for which Nanzan served as the headquarters until recently. The annual meetings, which are still continuing, bring together around twenty or thirty people for concentrated discussions on some question of the dialogue between philosophy and religion, usually centered on presentations by a living scholar in the field, among them Takizawa Keiji, Nishitani Keiji, and Ueda Shizuteru. The association's journal 『東西宗教研究』 is still produced annually at the Nanzan Institute. In 1985 the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies was established in Hawai'i and our association became affiliated with it and participated regularly in its annual meetings.

Among the publication projects Paul alluded to earlier was the production of a *Sourcebook* in Japanese philosophy. With combined grants of about \$250,000 and the collaboration of 120 translators, we were able to edit a volume of over 1,000 pages, since translated into Spanish, Korean, and Chinese. The *Sourcebook* is not simply a book about the history of philosophical thought in Japan from Prince Shōtoku to the present but represents a seven-year project involving specialists in Japanese intellectual history from around the world. During that time we organized preparatory workshops on Pure Land Buddhism, Tendai, Confucianism, modern academic philosophy, ethics, and woman philosophers. In order to hear from younger scholars, we set up conferences in Europe and Japan. The result were published in an eight-volume series entitled *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy* which is still active today.

PLS: Shifting to different kinds of meetings, we also ran a series of discussions with local scholars. Hayashi Makoto (of Aichi Gakuin University) was very much involved with us in this. Basically we just provided a place for local scholars to talk about their recent research and to discuss it among colleagues.

From 2013, and this is fairly recent, Okuyama Michiaki had an idea: there are many young international scholars in Japan working on their PhDs, at the stage of just before presenting their thesis. And so we thought, well, why don't we invite them to present in Japanese, before a panel of local Japanese scholars, and conduct the presentations and discussions in Japanese. We were worried about how this would work, but it turned out to be a great success. The young generation of scholars are all excellent speakers of Japanese. We had three of these meetings, and now these young scholars are in various academic positions around the world.



There are also various inter-religious workshops that we sponsored in cooperation with other religious groups. One of these meetings was held in Tunisia, mostly with European scholars who got together in Tunisia for a meeting in search of dialogue around religions in the Middle East. We also had a project in which we had a grant to visit research centers around the world. We ended up contacting forty-six centers in nineteen different countries and laid the foundation for a much broader, international network.

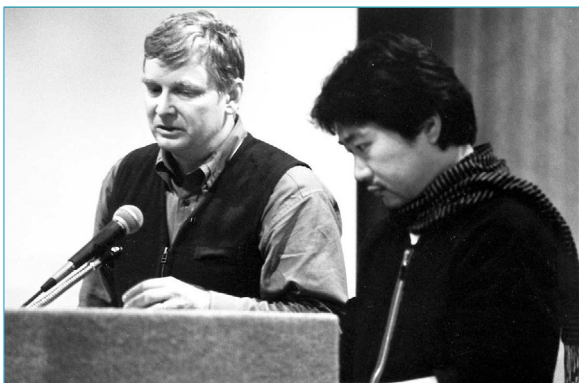


Seminars for Doctoral Students from Abroad

These sorts of meetings led to two very fruitful accomplishments. One was that we promoted the internationalization of the Japanese Association for Religious Studies (日本宗教学会, JARS). In 1999 the Japanese Association for Religious Studies held its annual meeting at Nanzan University, and we wanted to encourage the internationalization of the JARS, despite some resistance. We pushed for an increase in the use of topical panels, and the president of the American Academy of Religion came to Japan at our invitation and was on a panel with Shimazono Susumu and other key figures from the Japanese Association for Religious Studies. This, in turn, led to cooperation with the American Academy of Religion, with whom we worked to sponsor a “Focus on Japan” as the theme of the 2003 AAR annual conference in Atlanta. This is one of the first times that the AAR had a focus on a specific area, and they were also very interested in having more international input and participation from outside of North America. One of the big coups we pulled off was successfully inviting Kore'eda Hirokazu to attend and had a showing of his movie “Distance” (a tale of people connected in various ways to others involved in a cult mass suicide), followed by questions and answers....

JWH: And Paul served as the translator for Kore'eda in a question-and-answer session that followed the screening.

PLS: This was before Kore'eda became well known internationally when, a couple years later, one of his movies was an awardee at the Cannes Film Festival. The



Paul Swanson and Kore'eda Hirokazu

AAR also sponsored a reception in which they presented Shimazano (president of the JARS) with some gifts as a token of cooperation between the AAR and the JARS).

JWH: The Institute has always been conscious that it is part of the Catholic identity of Nanzan University. From the beginning we counted on the support of the Vatican through

relationships that Jan Van Bragt had nurtured. Two of these stand out: Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli and Archbishop Jean Jadot of Belgium. Pignedoli was president of the Secretary for Non-Christians. He supported the Institute and made Jan van Bragt and later Jan Swyngedouw counselors for the Vatican on interreligious matters. Archbishop Jean-Jadot came to Japan in 1983 where we guided him around numerous Shinto shrines and Buddhist monasteries. His progressive approach put him out of favor with Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Ratzinger. But he remained, to the end, a staunch supporter of the Nanzan Institute.

Paul spoke earlier of the inter-monastic exchange we were involved in. With the assistance of these two prelates in Rome, we were able to bring together abbots and abbesses from mainstream monasteries of Japan for extended stays in Catholic monasteries in Europe and the United States. On one occasion, Jan Van Bragt introduced Yamada Mumon (chief abbot of Myōshinji in Japan) to the Pope. These visits were then reciprocated with leading monastics from the west invited for stays in Japanese Buddhist monasteries. Father Kadowaki Kakichi, Jesuit from Sophia University in Tokyo, took over the program after two years. It continues independently to this day and publishes its own journal.



Jan Van Bragt and Yamada Mumon meet the Pope

In response to some pushback from certain quarters in the Church against interreligious dialogue, we decided in 1987, in collaboration with Stichting Porticus, a long-time supporter of the Institute, to invite two leading cardinals from Europe to introduce them firsthand to the religious reality of Japan. Cardinals Carol Martini and Godfried Danneels graciously accepted our offer to visit in successive years as ordinary citizens.



Cardinal Godfried Danneels



Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini

Question from the audience: Sorry, was this for visa purposes, or is there a reason why you wanted them to come in this way?

JWH: If they had come as Church dignitaries, they would have been expected to meet with their diplomatic counterparts. We wanted them to come as ordinary people and both of them agreed that this was for the best. It proved to be an electrifying experience for all of us, and we came to realize what extraordinary men they were, and their good humor, and their spiritual acumen.

PLS: Now we come to the book series. We're running out of time, and we still have this vast list of books, which we'll look at quickly. But first we should talk about desktop publishing. When I came to Nanzan in 1986, we were still using a daisy wheel printer to prepare the camera-ready copy. It was like an electric typewriter, with a replaceable wheel to type the text, and then we would cut and paste the kanji to the copy and send it to the printers. We took advantage of the great strides in computing and printing technology and software enhancements to develop a desktop publishing system before there was a name for it; it was a real pioneering effort, mostly driven by Jim's efforts.

I should add that at first we were not allowed to use our research funds to buy computers or software, because the university said, well, why does an academic need computers? To play Pac-Man? So we went to Hong Kong and bought our own computers, until the university recognized the role that computers could play for research. We gradually evolved to using laser printers with better and

better resolution, which allowed us to produce offset-quality camera-ready copy. We were also quick to put the material online as true open access, available freely for all, again even before there was a term for it.

JWH: As you see the list of our publications scrolling, we would like to point out that we typeset most of these books for the publishers, which gave us control over the contents and kept the price down. But more than that, these were not just based on manuscripts that were sent to us, typeset and published with Nanzan's name on it. The authors, in most cases, came to Japan, lived with us, and presented their work in seminars where the staff offered their criticism and suggestions for improvement. As a result, our fingerprints are on every page of these books. One such author is Mark Mullins, who is here today all the way from New Zealand. His first book on *Christianity Made in Japan* went through this process, and most recently we issued his study on Yasukuni fundamentalism.

PLS: As Jim said, people would come, either at our invitation or on their own, and we would sit down with them and discuss their work. They would often give informal presentations, or we would give feedback. We worked with various publishers. At first, we worked with different publishers for different books. We eventually set up a series with University of Hawai'i Press. We had a book called *Rude Awakenings*, and we invited Pat Crosby, one of the head editors of the University of Hawai'i Press to come to the Institute. We explained to her what we do, we've got this book, and we want to start a series and she said, "Well, with only one book, you don't have a series, you have a 'serie.'" As it turned out, we had another manuscript in the pipeline, the book on *Pruning the Bodhi Tree*, so then we had the basis for a series. And that series now has seventeen volumes, the latest volume being *The New Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*, edited by Matthew McMullen.

JWH: With a growing interest in Japanese philosophy in Italy in 2004, I teamed up with a number of colleagues to edit a series of translations of modern Japanese philosophy into Italian called Tetsugaku. Later we collaborated with the Sisters of Seton Hall in Korea and their center, the Seton Center for Interreligious Dialogue, to launch a series of books called Seton Studies in Korean Religions. Later our own Kim Seung Chul inaugurated a collection in Korean whose seven volumes include translations of Japanese philosophical works, as well as works of interreligious dialogue previously published at the Institute in Japanese.

PLS: Last but not least, there are a number of books in Japanese, which are worked on mostly by Okuyama Michiaki, who unfortunately is not with us anymore, but he has a series of books on Japanese religion called *Gendai sekai to shūkyō* 現代世界と宗教 (Religion and the Modern World) published by Transview. There is another series that Okuyama is working on, *Shūkyōgaku saikō* 現宗教学再考

(Rethinking Religious Studies) which consists of translations and introductions to classic Western works on religion.

I wish we could spend more time looking at these, but we're running out of time. In closing, I'd like to go back again to the image that Jim presented of the teacup, and how it creates a space for something to happen, to have a cup of tea. And to me, this is what the Institute has been, and it has been such a great privilege for me to work here. The Nanzan Institute has truly been a place that provides the time and the space to creatively produce work that is not necessarily assigned to you, but which you think is important and worthy of attention, and often requires a long-term commitment. And I hope that Nanzan, the Institute, will continue to be like a teacup. But another feature of a teacup is that it is fragile, and can easily be chipped or broken. I pray that the Institute will maintain its role as a sturdy cup that is inviting, that includes a lot of people from around the world, and encourages creative research.

JWH: Like Paul, I too, am proud to have been part of this history, proud of its covered-wagon days, proud of its achievements, but also proud of the obstacles we had to struggle against which drew us closer together, and eventually brought us closer to achieving President Hirschmeier's original dream of a forum where religions of philosophies east and west can talk to one another and learn from one another. Thank you for your attention.