

Personal Reflections on Suzuki Daisetsu's *Nihonteki Reisei*

YASUTOMI SHIN'YA

IN RECENT years, Otani University has held commemorative events in honor of Suzuki Daisetsu 鈴木大拙 (1870–1966) several times because he served as the first member of the Religious Studies Department at the university. From July 6 to 8, 1989, an exhibition was held in commemoration of his twenty-fifth memorial service entitled “When Teitarō 貞太郎 Became Daisetsu.” Also, from October 10 to November 28, 2006, an exhibition entitled “Daisetsu: The Man and His Studies” was held at the university’s museum in commemoration of his fortieth memorial service. I remember having the opportunity to assist at those events.

Further, in 2011, the Eastern Buddhist Society, which was founded by Suzuki, celebrated the ninetieth anniversary of its founding. On May 16 of that year, the society welcomed Professor James Dobbins of Oberlin College, who delivered a lecture entitled “The Many Faces of Shinran: Images from D. T. Suzuki and *The Eastern Buddhist*.” The late Itō Emyō 伊東慧明, who previously served as Secretary-General of the society, and myself responded to Professor Dobbins’s talk.¹ Over 120 people, including many who had long been involved with the activities of the society, attended that event, which turned out to be like a meeting of alumni and old friends.

Looking back, I can see that for those of us associated with Otani University, Suzuki is an extremely influential person. Although his physical form passed away on July 12, 1966, I cannot help but think that he is still living as the *dharmakāya*.

¹ This lecture and the responses were included in *The Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 42, no. 2 (2011).

In this short piece in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of his passing, I would like to take up Suzuki's work *Nihonteki reisei* 日本的靈性 (Japanese Spirituality), which has been the focus of much attention recently, and consider a few issues related to it as they come to mind.

I. THE ISSUE OF THE PHRASE "JAPANESE SPIRITUALITY"

1) *Its Distinctiveness*

Nihonteki reisei was written in 1944 at the height of the Pacific War. Two years later, and in light of Japan's defeat, Suzuki published *Reiseiteki Nihon no kensetsu* 靈性的日本の建設 (The Creation of a Spiritual Japan, 1946)² and *Nihonteki reiseiteki jikaku* 日本的靈性的自覚 (Japanese Spiritual Awakening, 1946),³ which were followed the next year by *Nihon no reiseika* 日本の靈性化 (The Spiritualization of Japan, 1947).⁴ These works could be referred to as Suzuki's "Tetralogy on Spirituality."

Among these four, Koyasu Nobukuni, Professor Emeritus at Osaka University and scholar of Japanese intellectual history, compares the first, which was written during the war, with the last, which was written after it had ended, saying,

The latter [i.e., *Nihon no reiseika*] is the deceptive apologetics of the postwar Suzuki of 1947. It is not possible to describe the "spiritual awakening" of Kamakura Japan—that is, the significance of the arising of Zen and Pure Land thought—with any real impact based on this postwar discussion of spirituality. *Nihonteki reisei* describes the realization of a universal "spirituality" within Kamakura-period Japan (particular Japan) in the form of Zen and Pure Land thought. In doing so, it is a work of the wartime Japan of the 1940s. Together with the "philosophy of world history" of the Kyoto school, it can be said to aim toward "overcoming modernity."⁵

Here, Koyasu points out the distinctive nature of *Nihonteki reisei*, clearly distinguishing it from Suzuki's postwar discussions of spirituality and arguing that that work was written specifically about the arising of a universal spirituality within the "particular" of Kamakura Japan.

² Suzuki *Daisetsu zenshū* 鈴木大拙全集 (hereafter, SDZ), vol. 9, pp. 1–149.

³ SDZ, vol. 9, pp. 150–258.

⁴ SDZ, vol. 8, pp. 225–420.

⁵ Koyasu 2014, p. 201.

It goes without saying that Suzuki took up the term “Japanese spirituality” (*Nihonteki reisei*) to serve as an opposite to phrases such as “Yamato spirit” (*Yamato damashi* 大和魂) and “Japanese spirit” (*Nippon seishin* 日本精神) which were much touted at the time. Suzuki highly evaluates the Kamakura period—when many outstanding Buddhists were active—as a period when such a universal spiritual awakening appeared in Japan. Wartime Japan, under the ideology of State Shinto, was engaged in fighting a war based on a rigid and self-congratulating spiritualism that held up the “Yamato spirit” as its driving force. It was in that historical setting that Suzuki declared: “Japanese spirituality is not yet expressed in its pure state in Shinto. Further, what is being taken up as Shrine Shinto, or Old Shinto, is nothing more than the ossification of the primal folk practices of the Japanese people and is not at all in touch with that spirituality.”⁶ In contrast, he saw the spirit of self-negation found in the thought of Zen and Pure Land Buddhism as the true Japanese spirit and took these Buddhist traditions up under the name of “Japanese spirituality.”

2) Suzuki’s Spirit (*Reisei*) and Kiyozawa’s Spirit (*Seishin*)

If we look at the preface to Suzuki’s *Nihonteki reisei*, about the definition of spirit (*seishin*), he writes, “When the word spiritual (*seishin*) is used, it is understood to have the sense of something that is in the opposite position to something that is material. It is not necessarily limited to things of a religious nature.”⁷ Also, he says, “The concept of ‘spiritual’ always contains dualistic thought within it.”⁸ Suzuki endows his term “Japanese spirituality” (*reisei*) with a meaning that is opposite to such dualism. In that sense, his *Nihonteki reisei* can be seen as a work that offered a logic that could counter and oppose the direction in which Japan was heading during the war, when terms like “Yamato spirit” and “Japanese spirit” were in heavy use.

The term “spirituality” that Suzuki criticizes in *Nihonteki reisei* was also used by the young disciples of Kiyozawa Manshi 清沢満之 (1863–1903) who urged on the Seishinshugi 精神主義 (Cultivating Spirituality) movement through the publication of the journal *Seishinkai* 精神界 (Spiritual World). Suzuki likely knew that there was such a movement under the name Seishinshugi in the late Meiji period, but he never directly refers to it. What deserves our attention here, though, is that the Seishinshugi movement was an attempt to recover a foundational, religious subjectivity through Buddhism,

⁶ Suzuki 2010, p. 35.

⁷ Suzuki 2010, p. 28.

⁸ Suzuki 2010, p. 29.

particularly Shinran's thought, at a time in Japanese history when many had been swept up in the currents of Westernization and the drive toward "Civilization and Enlightenment" and had lost a sense of spiritual grounding.

On returning to Tokyo in 1899, Kiyozawa keenly felt the disastrous effects of a lack of spirituality when looking upon the modern people he found living there who were drifting about, having lost a firm spiritual foundation for living their lives. *Seishinshugi*, which was set forth as a response to that experience, was more than anything else intended to serve as a road map by which we, who are caught up in transmigratory anguish brought about by being tossed around by our external circumstances and the people around us, can attain genuine peace and recover a foundational subjectivity—our genuine selves—by taking the *Tathāgata*, the absolute or the infinite, as the foundation for our lives. Although the term *seishinshugi*—which might literally be translated as "spiritualism"—is used, it does not refer to a system of thought, but instead a practical method for living in the actual world, a spiritual pathway that takes religious faith as its motto.

3) *The Universality of Suzuki's Concept of Spirituality*

I first learned of the term "spirituality" (*reisei*) soon after entering the Shin Buddhist Studies Department at Otani University as a graduate student. My advisor Matsubara Yūzen 松原祐善 (1906–1991) used it. As I have noted elsewhere, "When I first entered Professor Matsubara's seminar, he did not provide any detailed instructions for us. He simply emphasized the point that Shin Buddhist studies is different from other academic endeavors because it must touch upon the religious spirituality of human beings."⁹

Professor Matsubara used this term "spirituality" in the way that Suzuki defined it, as an expression of a universal religious sensibility. He stressed that Shin Buddhist studies should not end up just as a philological or exegetical pursuit. I first learned that Suzuki's term *reisei* is translated into English as "spirituality" when Professor Norman Waddell gave me a copy of his translation of *Nihonteki reisei*. In his introductory note, he discusses the universal significance of this work as follows:

Japanese Spirituality represents a side of Suzuki Daisetz unknown to Western readers familiar only with his English works. It was directed to the Japanese at a time of growing uncertainty and despair. But in attempting to show them their true, unmilitary,

⁹ Yasutomi 1991, p. 379.

might, it lays open for all readers the thought and wisdom of one of the spiritual masters of our time.¹⁰

Recently, the “Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki” is being published as a four-volume series by the University of California Press with Richard M. Jaffe as its General Editor. The second volume of that series was edited by James C. Dobbins and contains Suzuki’s major writings on Pure Land Buddhism in English, as well as selections from Waddell’s translation of *Nihonteki reisei*.¹¹ Its inclusion in this series seems to speak of the universal significance of this work.

II. THE ISSUE OF NATIONALISM IN SUZUKI’S WORKS

1) *Criticisms of Suzuki*

Referring to Kirita Kiyohide’s *Suzuki Daisetsu kenkyū kiso shiryō* 鈴木大拙研究基礎資料,¹² we can see that the relationship between Zen Buddhism and Japanese nationalism became an important topic in studies on Suzuki in the 1990s. The works from this period are a reevaluation of Zen—which was extremely well received in the West up to that point—based on research into its connection with nationalism both before and after World War II. To give a chronological list of the authors of the major works that addressed this issue, we can point to Bernard Faure (1993), Robert Sharf (1994), Galen Amstutz (1997), and Brian Victoria (1997). In Japan, Sueki Fumihiko was the first to take notice and comment upon this research (2000). In a later article, he reflects on those criticisms, saying,

Regarding Suzuki, in recent years, what has been discussed the most is this problem (the problem of nationalism and war responsibility). Among the works that address this issue, the criticism in Brian Victoria’s *Zen at War* is the most representative. Since his criticism was extremely severe, some have responded to it in defense of Suzuki and the debate is growing heated.¹³

As Sueki points out here, especially after Victoria’s book was translated into Japanese by Aimee Louise Tsujimoto in 2001,¹⁴ the work precipitated a major debate in scholarship on Suzuki within Japan as well.

¹⁰ Waddell 1972, p. viii.

¹¹ Suzuki 2015.

¹² Kirita 2005.

¹³ Sueki 2010, p. 26.

¹⁴ Tsujimoto 2001.

2) *The Debate between Brian Victoria and Satō Taira*

In *Zen at War*, Victoria writes the following about Suzuki's involvement with Japanese aggression in Asia.

His "antiwar" statements are nothing more than common sense They said no more than "Don't pick a fight with someone you can't beat." Suzuki was twenty-four at the time of the Sino-Japanese War, thirty-four at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, sixty-one at the time of the Manchurian Incident, sixty-seven at the start of total war against China. As far as this author knows, Suzuki never wrote anything that directly criticized Japan's military activities in Asia.¹⁵

In response to this sort of criticism of Suzuki, Satō Kenmyō Taira, who was heavily influenced by Suzuki in his later years, published a book entitled *Suzuki Daisetsu no makoto: Sono ikkan shita sensō hinin o tōshite* 鈴木大拙のまこと：その一貫した戦争否認を通して (The Genuine Suzuki Daisetsu: Through His Consistent Denial of War),¹⁶ which included a revised version of an article that was originally published in the *Matsugaoka Bunko kenkyū nenpō* 松ヶ丘文庫研究年報. That work was again considerably revised, translated into English, and published in *The Eastern Buddhist* under the title "D. T. Suzuki and the Question of War."¹⁷ In *Suzuki Daisetsu no makoto*, Satō states,

When I read *Nihonteki reisei* during my student days at Kyoto University as the protests against the signing of the Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty between Japan and the United States were raging, I was moved by Suzuki's criticism of Shinto and I can remember being astounded when I checked the date of publication. I sincerely wish that Brian Victoria could digest the thought that is set forth in this work.¹⁸

¹⁵ Tsujimoto 2001, p. 226. See Victoria 1997, p. 152. The original reads: "Some observers . . . interpret them as "antiwar" statements. Another way to view them is simple common sense, without any moral or political intent: Don't pick a fight with someone you can't beat! . . . Much more important, however, is the fact that he never criticized Japan's long-standing aggression against the peoples of Asia."

¹⁶ Satō 2007.

¹⁷ Satō 2008.

¹⁸ Satō 2007, p. 66. Neither this passage nor the following one appear in the English version of the article.

However, Victoria did not accept this position of Satō's, so at the Eastern Buddhist Society, we decided to introduce their arguments in the same issue. Victoria wrote a piece under the title, "The 'Negative Side' of D. T. Suzuki's Relationship to War"¹⁹ and Satō responded to that in "Brian Victoria and the Question of Scholarship."²⁰ Rather than introducing the content of those articles here, I will just mention them in the hopes that readers will refer to them directly.

3) *At Otani University during the War*

In criticizing Suzuki, Victoria focuses on an article entitled "Daijō bukkyō no sekaiteki shimei: Wakaki hitobito ni yosu" 大乘仏教の世界的使命：若き人々に寄す (The Global Mission of Mahayana Buddhism: Words for the Young People).²¹ Regarding Victoria's stance, Satō responds:

Victoria's position is that Suzuki preached to the students of Otani University that Buddhists should actively participate in the Greater East Asian War. There is no way that Suzuki Daisetsu would say such a thing.²²

The question of what exactly Suzuki preached to the students at Otani University during the war is certainly of great interest. In commemoration of the centennial of its founding on October 13, 2001, Otani University published *Ōtani Daigaku hyakunen shi* 大谷大学百年史 (A History of Otani University's First Hundred Years).²³ As a supplemental volume, a work containing firsthand accounts of students' experiences during the war was published under the title *Senji taiken shū: "Gakuto shutsujin," "kinrō dōin" no kiroku* 戦時体験集：「学徒出陣」・「勤労働員」の記録 (Collection of Wartime Experiences: Records of the "Military Mobilization of Students" and the "Mobilization for Labor").²⁴ This work contains the responses to a survey that was sent to former students who had either been drafted into the military during the war or mobilized to participate in the war effort through labor within Japan. I participated in the project to create this work as a

¹⁹ Victoria 2010.

²⁰ Satō 2010.

²¹ Suzuki 1943.

²² Satō 2007, p. 48.

²³ Ōtani Daigaku Hyakunen Shi Henshū Iinkai 2001.

²⁴ Ōtani Daigaku Shinshū Sōgō Kenkyūsho Shinshū Gakuji Kenkyū Han Shinshū Gakuji Shi Kenkyū 2004.

researcher in charge of administrative duties, so I was involved in the editing of the responses to this survey. There were a few responses that touch on Suzuki Daisetsu's words and actions during the late stages of the war. My impression is that Suzuki was not one to encourage the young people who were heading to the battlefield with words of strong support for the war effort. Ōga Sunao 大神順 responded by writing:

In November [of 1943], a rally was held in the lecture hall to encourage the students who were being sent to the front. . . . Representing the professors of the university, Suzuki Daisetsu spoke, saying the following, profoundly meaningful words: "Don't go dying meaningless deaths. There are times when one cannot help but die, but I pray for all of your safe return. Don't go throwing your lives away for the sake of loyalty or revenge."²⁵ Suzuki thought that Japan's losing the war was inevitable. . . . I think Suzuki was courageous to say such things in front of the army officer assigned to oversee activities at the university.²⁶

It is said that most of the people who were sent off to the battlefield would say, "I'm on my way now, and I'll return dead." In such a situation, I believe that the Suzuki Daisetsu who told students to value their lives and not die like dogs certainly did not encourage young people to fervently support the Japanese war effort.

III. THE ISSUE OF *MYŌKŌNIN*

1) The Significance of the Complete Edition of Nihonteki reisei Edited By Sueki Fumihiko

In *Nihonteki reisei*, Buddhism is understood to include Zen and the *nenbutsu*. There is no mention there of either esoteric Buddhism or the Nichiren school, both of which played a major role in Japanese Buddhism. Sueki Fumihiko discusses this as a limitation of this work as follows:

²⁵ Translator's note: The term used here is "*chūshingura*" 忠臣蔵, which literally means "storehouse of loyal retainers" and is used to refer to the famous story of the forty-seven loyal samurai of the Akō 赤穂 domain who took revenge for the loss of life of their master in a suicidal attack on the person who ordered his death.

²⁶ Ōtani Daigaku Shinshū Sōgō Kenkyūsho Shinshū Gakuji Kenkyū Han Shinshū Gakuji Shi Kenkyū 2004, pp. 52–53.

It emphasizes Zen and Pure Land, as well as the privileged position of Kamakura Buddhism. In current research on Buddhism, the view that holds Kamakura Buddhism to be special and sees it as the high point of Japanese Buddhism no longer holds water. Further, Japanese Buddhism has developed in a variety of directions, so it is impossible to say, as this work [i.e., *Nihonteki reisei*] does, that Zen and Pure Land are particularly excellent. There is both the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* and those of esoteric Buddhism in Japan. Japanese Buddhism must be understood from this more comprehensive perspective.²⁷

In that sense, it may be that we have come to a time when the frame used to understand Japanese Buddhism in *Nihonteki reisei* deserves criticism.

In the fourth part of *Nihonteki reisei*, *myōkōnin* 妙好人 (Suzuki uses the translation “wondrously happy people” for this term that refers to devout Shin Buddhist followers) are dealt with as a sort of culmination of Pure Land Buddhism, while the fifth part contains a discussion of “The Zen of the *Diamond Sutra*.” Although most of the editions of *Nihonteki reisei* do not actually contain this fifth part, Sueki edited this edition to include it, returning the work to its original form, which is why it is referred to as the “Complete Edition.” Since Suzuki takes up both Zen and Pure Land as the most representative forms of Japanese Buddhism, Sueki’s choice to include the portion on “The Zen of the *Diamond Sutra*” seems to be quite appropriate.

2) *The Perspective of the “Person” (nin)*

Suzuki discusses the *myōkōnin* in a very positive light in *Nihonteki reisei*. In particular, he focuses on the following two people: (1) Akao no Dōshū 赤尾の道宗 (n.d.–1516), a disciple of Rennyō’s who lived in the Muromachi period, and (2) Asahara Saichi 浅原才市 (1850–1932), who passed away in 1932 at the age of eighty-three. Suzuki especially admired Asahara Saichi and later edited a volume of his poems entitled *Myōkōnin Asahara Saichi shū* 妙好人浅原才市集 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1967).

Myōkōnin were held up as the ideal form for Shin devotees to follow in the Edo period and a great many biographies and stories about them have been passed down to the present. *Myōkōnin den* 妙好人伝 (Biographies of *Myōkōnin*) by Gōsei 仰誓 (1721–1794) is particularly famous, but there, the practitioners of the *nenbutsu* who are praised are the Shin devotees who

²⁷ Sueki’s commentary in Suzuki 2010, p. 464.

follow pliantly along in an unreasonable social system and in the face of poor treatment from their neighbors without uttering a word of discontent or dissatisfaction. That is, in this work, *myōkōnin* are presented as the ideal expected of people in the feudal society of Edo Japan.

The *myōkōnin* that Suzuki takes up, on the other hand, are the Shin followers who “express in a pure form direct, Japanese spiritual intuition.” In that sense, the fact that Suzuki took up the *myōkōnin* is quite significant.

We must ask, however, if we can really endow the *myōkōnin* with so much importance that they should be seen as the religious personalities that best represent Shin Buddhism. In the past, I harbored such doubts, but now I see that what Suzuki held to be important was the fact that they were what Suzuki calls “*nin*” 人, individual people who embody religious truth. I particularly got that sense when reading Suzuki’s *Rinzai no konpon shisō* 臨濟の根本思想, which was published just after the end of the war.

In the words of Linji 臨濟 (n.d.–867?), spirituality is the “person” (*nin* 人; this character should be read *nin* throughout). It is “the true person without any rank” and “the person of the way who relies on nothing.” The *Linjilu* 臨濟錄 was written by this “person.” It is a record of the working of this “person.” When you understand this “person,” you grasp what permeates this work.²⁸

This stance can also be seen in the fact that Suzuki entitles the eighth section of part 5 of *Nihonteki reisei* “The Person.”

Rather than attempting to grasp Shin Buddhism through its doctrines, Suzuki chose to grasp it through the human beings who live out those teachings. That choice seems to be the major significance of Suzuki’s spotlighting of the *myōkōnin* in *Nihonteki reisei*.

3) Thought and Experience

While Suzuki grasps Shin Buddhism through people—not doctrines—in *Nihonteki reisei*, for some reason, his evaluation of Shinran’s primary work, the *Kyōgyōshinshō* 教行信証, is far from shining. He writes:

The true province of Shinran’s tradition lies not in the *Kyōgyōshinshō*, but in his letters, in his hymns, and especially in the *Tannishō* 歎異抄. Scholars of Shin Buddhism look upon the *Kyōgyōshinshō* as if it were an unsurpassable scripture, and

²⁸ SDZ, vol. 3, p. 350.

while that might very well be true, Shinran's true apex cannot be encountered there, but must instead be directly intuited in the words that he uttered unaffectedly. The *Kyōgyōshinshō* contains the remnants of his aristocratic culture, his philosophy of doctrinal classification, and his scholarly disposition. It is not what makes him what he is.²⁹

Since Suzuki takes the position that the fountainhead of Japanese spirituality lies in Kamakura Buddhism's rootedness in the very real lives of the common people who tilled the earth and not in the aristocratic culture of the Heian elites throughout *Nihonteki reisei*, perhaps it is natural that he felt alienated by the *Kyōgyōshinshō*, which is a sophisticated exegetical treatise written in classical Chinese. Likely because of that foundational stance, in *Nihonteki reisei* Suzuki only makes negative evaluations of the *Kyōgyōshinshō*.

We should also note, however, that if we look at *Jōdokei shisōron* 浄土系思想論, which was published prior to *Nihonteki reisei*, Suzuki's appraisal of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* appears to be slightly different. In this work, there is no trace of such criticism. *Jōdokei shisōron* is made up of six essays that were originally published between 1939 and 1942.

What is of interest here is that the *Tannishō* is only rarely quoted in this work, while Suzuki shows great concern for the thought expressed by Tanluan 曇鸞 (476–542) in his *Jingtu lunzhu* 浄土論註, which heavily influenced the development of Shinran's doctrinal system. In the preface to *Jōdokei shisōron*, Suzuki writes: "Each of the following six essays were created out of the excitement I felt at the time that I wrote them. I have just noted down the traces of the development of my thought just as it was."³⁰ Just how did Suzuki's thought develop over this time period? This question deserves more attention than I can give it here, but to just describe it superficially: none of the first three pieces in this work—"Shinshū kanken" 真宗管見, "Gokuraku to shaba" 極楽と娑婆, "Jōdōkan, myōgō, Zen" 浄土観・名号・禅—mention Tanluan's *Jingtu lunzhu* at all (with one or two minor exceptions), while in all three of the pieces in the latter half—"Jōdōkan zokukō: Jōdo ronchū o yomite" 浄土観続稿：『浄土論註』を讀みて, "Tariki no shinjin ni tsukite: Kyōgyōshinshō o yomite" 他力の信心につきて：『教行信証』を讀みて, "Gakan jōdo to myōgō" 我観浄土と名号—considerations of the *Jingtu lunzhu* fill a considerable amount of space. It appears that Suzuki's

²⁹ Suzuki 2010, p. 113.

³⁰ SDZ, vol. 6, p. 3.

encounter with the *Jingtu lunzhu* was a turning point that mitigated his negative assessment of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* into a somewhat more positive one.

While at first glance Zen, which is founded on the idea of *prajñā* (wisdom), and Pure Land, which takes the idea of compassion as its basis, appear to be entirely distinct, in Tanluan's work, these two are described as a single, inseparable thing. What impressed Suzuki, a Zen Buddhist, about the *Jingtu lunzhu* was the fact that it clarified the thought of *prajñā*, which Suzuki had initially thought was unrelated to other power in Shin Buddhism. If we remember that Suzuki both held religious experience to be important and wrote a history of Zen thought, we can see why he particularly took note of the *myōkōnin* on the one hand and *Jingtu lunzhu*, which takes the thought of *prajñā* and emptiness as its basis, on the other.

Of course, it is still open to question whether it is possible to fully understand Shin Buddhism or Shinran just through those two points. At the request of Miyatani Hōgan 宮谷法含 (1882–1962) in March of 1956, Suzuki began translating the *Kyōgyōshinshō* into English. It seems that he would occasionally mutter, “I see, I see. This is what Shinran wanted to say,” while he was making the translation.³¹ I believe that Suzuki's stance of looking at things and describing them from a position of broad understanding is extremely important.

CONCLUSION

I have taken this opportunity, fifty years after Suzuki's passing, to reflect on his *Nihonteki reisei*. The thoughts set forth above are no more than personal reflections that have come to mind on this occasion.

It seems that *Nihonteki reisei* is being read by a great many people these days. The publication of the complete edition under the editorship of Sueki Fumihiko has certainly contributed to that renewed interest. By 2015, it was already in its fourth printing. In August of 2014, Uchida Tatsuru and Shaku Tesshū published *Nihon reisei ron* 日本靈性論³² and the same month, Koyasu Nobukuni's *Tannishō no kindai*, which devoted a chapter to considering the significance of Suzuki's *Nihonteki reisei*, was also published.

Further, perhaps in response to this renewed interest, the term *reisei* was also included in the sixth edition of the *Kōjien* 広辞苑, even though it did not appear in the fifth edition. The term is defined as follows: “Religious consciousness, spirituality. The drive to relate to a spiritual dimension that

³¹ Satō 1983, p. 139.

³² Uchida and Shaku 2014.

transcends the material. Spirituality.” According to James Dobbins, this definition is based on Suzuki’s.³³

If we look around ourselves, we can see that the sort of anti-intellectual trends and barbaric ways of thinking that were prevalent when Suzuki wrote *Nihonteki reisei* are growing more and more apparent yet again, so it seems to me that we have much to learn from this work today.

(Translated by Michael Conway)

ABBREVIATION

SDZ *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū* 鈴木大拙全集. 40 vols. Ed. Furuta Shōkin 古田紹欽, Hisamatsu Shin’ichi 久松真一, and Yamaguchi Susumu 山口益. New, enlarged ed. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999–2003.

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³³ Dobbins 2014, p. 91.

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