Syncretism chapter in
A Passion for Japan
by Steve McCarty

University of Hyōgo
Kōbe, July 13, 2022

Order the book at:
https://www.amazon.com/Passion-Japan-Collection-Personal-Narratives/dp/4991150736
or: https://www.amazon.co.jp/-/en/John-Rucynski/dp/4991150736
or download the flyer at: https://doi.org/10.17613/k16h-f883
Chapter 26 traces the eventful biography of Steve McCarty vis-à-vis Japan. The story spans decades, from graduate school specializing in Japan to discovering an astonishing syncretism of Asian religions. Along the way, the author gained a Japanese family and became a rare foreign full professor in 1993. Anecdotes vividly portray daily life, mostly on the southern island of Shikoku, but also in Nagoya and Osaka. Playing on many baseball teams brought the author into popular groups where members are frank and humorous. Functioning in daily relationships in Japanese, a college teaching career, and researching original sources were all motivating to improve language skills and adapt to the culture.

The author led language teaching and research organizations, and collaborated on multilingual guidebooks to Shikoku with local teachers. After moving to Osaka in 2004, all family members became surprisingly successful. Invited by the government to regularly introduce Japan to visiting officials from around the world, it has become clear that everything learned about Asia, the Japanese language, culture, and people proves useful and provokes reflection.
Steve McCarty was born in Boston and specialized in Japan at the University of Hawaii for an MA degree in Asian religions. He has been a full professor for most of his 40 years in Japan. He currently lectures for Osaka Jogakuin University and the government foreign aid agency JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). Since 1998 he has also served as President of the World Association for Online Education. His publications on Japan, Asian studies, bilingualism, language teaching with technology, and online education are open access at: https://japanned.hcommons.org
Presentation Outline

Topics correspond to chapter sections, but the content mostly supplements the chapter. Ask me any questions for more details about these topics. Enjoy reading the chapter!

A passion for Asian religions: in Boston, Taos, San Francisco, and Honolulu
- Books on Asian religions, Hesse’s *Siddhartha*, Tibetan yoga, & Zen
- Encounters with Alan Watts, Ram Dass, Allen Ginsberg, Edwin O. Reischauer; in Japan: Donald Keene and the Dalai Lama; being an active witness to history.

A passion for Japanese-Americans & Japanese people was chiefly why I specialized in Japan and decided to live here

Daily life on the Pilgrimage Island of Shikoku (photo slides)

Playing Baseball for language fluency & acculturation – *hotte-oke*!

Marriage & Family Life – one and only one wife; what my mother-in-law says

Teaching Content-Based English as a Foreign Language in Osaka since 2004
- Creative group presentation projects: drawing, job interviews; podcasting

Intercultural Communication and Bilingualism – in daily life, research, and as classes I teach

Syncretism of Asian Religions in a Mandala of Mountains (Iconography slides)
Welcomed to Research the Pilgrimage of Shikoku
Iconography of Kompira-san
Fig. 30: Diagram of Relations between the Mountains, Divinities and Kūkai
Thank you!

Publications on Japan:
https://wilmina.academia.edu/SteveMcCarty/Japan
or https://japanned.hcommons.org/japanology

Contact User ID: waoesteve
@gmail, Facebook & Twitter