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Author

Washington, Garrett

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Fighting Brick with Brick: Chikazumi Jōkan and Buddhism's Response to Christian Space in Imperial Japan

Garrett Washington, College of Wooster

Abstract

In 1915, with the support of Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land) Buddhism's Higashi Honganji sect and dozens of private Buddhist donors, Buddhist priest Chikazumi Jōkan erected a new, one-of-a-kind Buddhist meeting hall in Tokyo, the Kyūdō Kaikan. Chikazumi conceived of the building as a clear and deliberate spatial challenge to the crowded Protestant churches and lecture halls of turn-of-the-twentieth-century Tokyo. He chose prominent Western-style architect Takeda Goichi (1872–1938), rather than a traditional Japanese shrine or temple carpenter, to design it. The new building, in tandem with the adjacent Kyūdō Gakusha (Way Seekers Dormitory) that Chikazumi established in 1902, spoke to, and significantly impacted, the socio-moral, intellectual, and religious life of hundreds of young Tokyoites. These two buildings represented a response to Protestant Christianity's popularity and relevance like no other in imperial Japan. In order to achieve the religious evangelism and suprasectarian reform that he envisioned for Buddhism, Chikazumi proved willing to apply observations made in the West and appropriate practical Western Christian architectural features. Through an analysis of drawings, photographs, periodicals, institutional records, and other sources, this article tells the story of the rare fusion of opposites as Chikazumi equipped Buddhism to compete with Protestantism for the attention and devotion of the educated elite.

Beginning in the early Meiji era (1868–1912), unprecedented numbers of people in Japan, from all walks of life, realized that religion was something constantly remade and that they could actively and personally participate in this process. More voices than ever before sought to develop new religious responses to the problems and questions of the age and to harness the potential of religious belief and practice to impact society at large. The Meiji government and scholars in service of the state increasingly required religion to symbolize, unify, and mobilize the nation (Gluck 1985; Hardacre 1989). Seeking to limit and then define the connections between the sacred and secular spheres, the state created new laws and institutions to exercise

control over religious groups of all faiths. And yet within, and at times outside of, these boundaries, both lay and ordained Japanese also found various ways to exercise religious agency.

Whether actively supporting and furthering the agenda of the state, acting in direct opposition to it, or taking a middle path, religious leaders and believers worked diligently to strengthen the vitality and social relevance of their religious organizations. At the literal center of these efforts were the new religious gathering spaces of folk Shintō, Buddhism, Christianity, and so-called “new religions,” which were marked as principal targets of government restrictions in Japan. Seeking to attract and affect Japanese society, religious believers created new types of religious space that catered to the increasing number of Japanese searching for spiritual and moral guidance amidst the enormous sociocultural upheaval of the Meiji period (Bernstein 1976). In doing so, these citizens were claiming a contested set of powers—those of creating, determining the social function of, and utilizing religious space—that were being increasingly appropriated by, and limited to, the state. Thus, rather than standing alone in imperial Japan, state-endorsed and state-funded Shintō shrines were complemented by hundreds of thousands of other shrines, as well as temples and churches, resulting in a legacy of varied, adaptive religious architecture that continues to this day.

The diverse nature of Japanese religious sites was particularly evident in the national capital, where a growing and diverse body of religious organizations built new gathering spaces. Religious leaders of different faiths worked, often competing against one another, to capture the hearts, minds, and yen of the country’s educated elite, and to disseminate views and ideas outward to the rest of Japan. Among the most heated and well-noted rivalries was that between Christian and Buddhist clergy in Meiji- and Taishō-era Tokyo. While Christian and Buddhist institutions shared a centuries-long history of mutual antipathy in Japan, the legalization and subsequent growth of Christianity in the mid-nineteenth century posed a new and special threat to Buddhism. Suddenly, foreign Protestant missionaries and educators ranked among the most respected of experts and immigrated in increasing numbers. Highly evangelical, they were strongly intent on converting Buddhist and Shintō adherents to Christianity. Yet, above all, it was, arguably, their taste for and aptitude at creating new institutions and new gathering spaces that made foreign and Japanese Protestants such an important enemy for temple Buddhism in imperial Japan.

Despite suffering both directly and indirectly from government restrictions on religion, Buddhism made a response to Christianity that scholars have noted. Buddhist individuals wrote and spoke out against Protestant presence and ideology (Rogers and Rogers 1990). To compete with Protestant institutions of education and charity, Buddhist organizations established sectarian religious schools in the capital and, more visibly, offered benevolent services to the unfortunate (Davis 1992, 178–179). While these efforts have received scholarly attention, one strategy has remained almost entirely unexplored. A body within Japan's largest Buddhist sect facilitated and endorsed the creation of a new religious gathering space in Tokyo that would compete in appearance and function with the churches so successfully built, filled, and utilized by Protestant Christians in the capital.

In 1915, with the support of Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land) Buddhism's Higashi Honganji sect and dozens of private Buddhist donors, Buddhist priest Chikazumi Jōkan erected a new, one-of-a-kind Buddhist meeting hall in Tokyo, the Kyūdō Kaikan. Chikazumi conceived of the building as a clear and deliberate spatial challenge to the crowded Protestant churches and lecture halls of turn-of-the-twentieth-century Tokyo. He chose Western-style architect Takeda Goichi (1872–1938), rather than a traditional Japanese shrine or temple carpenter, to design it. In tandem with the adjacent Kyūdō Gakusha (Way Seekers Dormitory) that he established in 1902, Chikazumi spoke to, and significantly impacted, the socio-moral, intellectual, and religious life of hundreds of young Tokyoites and realized an unparalleled Buddhist response to Protestant Christianity's popularity and relevance in imperial Japan. In order to achieve the religious evangelism and suprasectarian reform that he envisioned for Buddhism, Chikazumi applied observations made in the West and appropriated practical Western Christian architectural features. Through an analysis of drawings, photographs, periodicals, institutional records, and other sources, this article tells the story of the rare fusion of opposites that resulted in the creation of the Kyūdō Kaikan. Employing this mixture of spatial strategies that leaders of his religious tradition had not theretofore envisioned, Chikazumi equipped Buddhism to compete with Protestantism for the attention and devotion of Tokyo's educated elite.

Kyūdō Kaikan in Historiography

Beginning in the mid-1990s, the Kyūdō Kaikan and the adjacent Kyūdō Gakusha ceased

to be the forgotten and abandoned buildings that they had been for decades, and Chikazumi Jōkan's reputation will likely have a similar fate. Through the considerable efforts of Chikazumi's grandson, Chikazumi Shinichi, and his wife, Chikazumi Yōko, the deteriorated and condemned Kyūdō Kaikan and Kyūdō Gakusha were given new life in the 1990s. Both architects completely renovated the Kyūdō Kaikan in 1994 and then remodeled the neighboring Kyūdō Gakusha into a semiluxury condominium building in 2006 (Sato 2005). Regardless of how recent scholarship on historic preservationism would characterize either of these projects, these undertakings are very important. They allowed the public to rediscover two historically significant and almost completely unknown buildings in Tokyo, and they unearthed important archival materials inside. Drawing on those sources, a handful of recent scholarly presentations and publications are transforming the work and impact of Chikazumi Jōkan from a mere footnote into a new and fruitful research area of interest.

Until now, Chikazumi Jōkan has not occupied a prominent place in the historiography of modern Japanese Buddhism. Ryan Ward has attributed Chikazumi's near complete absence from discussions of modern Buddhism to certain inconsistencies in his reformism. After three decades of advocating modernism, antisectarianism, the elimination of gender- and seniority-based differentiation, and other relatively progressive stances, his later years were characterized by strong and visible support for the structural integrity and legacy of the Ōtani sect within the Higashi Honganji sect.¹ This paradox (*gyakusetsu*) has made it difficult and even problematic to include Chikazumi's contribution to the foundations of the greater Ōtani religious reform movement of the postwar period (Ward 2010).

Two scholars, however, have already made great progress toward filling this void. Oomi Toshihiro has provided the first article-length discussion of Chikazumi Jōkan's ministry. Specifically, his piece describes Chikazumi's willingness to borrow Protestant Christian strategies like youth organizations, weekly sermons, and the general elevation of the laity within the religious institution (Oomi 2010; Oomi 2011). Iwata Fumiaki has made the first assessment, to our knowledge, of the impact that Chikazumi's written and spoken words had on the young educated elite of late Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa Japan. Iwata's research specifically focuses on Chikazumi's profound and notable effect on the religious and sociopolitical thought of Kyoto School philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (Iwata 2010a). Oomi and Iwata's scholarship has opened the

door for further inquiry, and the recently rediscovered records and documents that they and Ōzawa Kōji have organized and catalogued have made such research possible. Their work and these materials make two things abundantly clear. First, in the lives of many Tokyoites in imperial Japan, Chikazumi Jōkan played a role that deserves more scholarly attention than it has been given. Second, Chikazumi successfully attracted, interacted with, and influenced those individuals through his use of religious gathering space.

The Christian Spatial Menace

Chikazumi Jōkan borrowed from Protestant Christianity precisely because its methods were working abroad, and even in Japan, at the time. Although the entire Japanese Protestant movement was smaller than even the Higashi Honganji sect within Jōdō Shinshū Buddhism, its influence was disproportionately large among the capital's new middle class. Protestantism counted among its adherents doctors, lawyers, schoolteachers, professors, journalists, economists, and other professionals who played important roles in the life of the city and the nation (Washington 2009). These individuals were often converted as a result of attendance at missionary schools, encounters with Western missionaries, or religious experiences abroad (Scheiner 1970). However, beyond these roots, Protestantism possessed the capacity to grow. The movement proved able to attract new potential members, bring old and new believers together regularly, spread sociomoral messages among them, and motivate them to apply their religious morality in the secular world. This posed a threat to organized Buddhism in Japan, which lacked such abilities; without anything like the multifunctional church buildings of Japanese Protestantism, this lack seemed long-term and endemic.

By the time that Chikazumi Jōkan set out to change this situation, Japanese Protestant pastors had already established congregations and built churches in Tokyo for over thirty years. Although the pace of growth was relatively slow, by the early twentieth century, there were dozens of Protestant churches in the capital, and they boasted impressive attendance figures. Perhaps Tokyo's most popular church, Fujimichō Church, near Waseda University, hosted as many as one thousand attendees each Sunday, and over three hundred attendees came to service at each of a handful of other large churches (Tōya 1978, 39).

Japanese Protestant churches demonstrated that religion could be both attractive and relevant at the same time that they represented a challenge to Buddhist temples and the types of religious interactions that they hosted. Faced with the relative success and visibility of these churches, Chikazumi envisioned and established a new Buddhist religious gathering space that could compete with them spatially.

Envisioning the Kyūdō Kaikan

By the time that Chikazumi began to publicize his vision for a new religious gathering space in Hongō Ward in late 1903, he had spent several months abroad in the West. Sponsored by the Higashi Honganji, he toured Western Europe and the United States in 1900. While abroad, he had had conversations and made observations that proved instrumental in determining the shape and purpose of Kyūdō Kaikan. Seeking to satisfy a broad curiosity during his stays in England, Germany, Austria, France, Hungary, and the United States, Chikazumi paid specific attention to questions of religion and society. In England, he made trips to Westminster, Canterbury, and dozens of other religious sites of political significance (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 124–132). The young Buddhist reformer also made a point to visit Lutherhaus at the University of Wittenberg, the home of the young reformer who forever changed the face of Christianity (Chikazumi Yōko 2008).

In the United States, Chikazumi was particularly impressed with the active manner in which Protestant Christianity engaged with the social and political realms. In his effort to investigate the role of American religion in “social management” (*shakai keiei*), he visited the national headquarters of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in Chicago (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 196). Afterward he wrote admiringly of the religiously affiliated organization’s capacity to be so active and visible in the realm of social work and improvement (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 164). Chikazumi believed that Buddhism also possessed the potential to make a significant impact on modern Japanese society. Although Buddhism called for “discarding the temporal world, building a righteous world of righteousness, and founding the world of truth,” it also called for its adherents to practice “charity” (*jizenfuse*) and work with their “brethren” (*dōhō*) toward “helping and saving one another” (*aisuke aisukuu*) (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 180). By building a new religious gathering space in Tokyo, Chikazumi aimed to

better equip Buddhism to reform the hearts of Japanese youth and in turn to reach and impact Japanese society.

Only months after returning to Tokyo, Chikazumi began to write and speak publicly about the status of Buddhism in the capital and his plan to improve it. He lamented that, unlike the various sites for Protestants to gather, “so far there is no hall to which Buddhists can affiliate themselves in the capital” (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 195). Furthermore, he dreamed of a place that could “bring Buddhists of all sects together.” In particular, Chikazumi aimed to continue Higashi Honganji’s strategy of appealing to the students of Tokyo Imperial University and Tokyo Higher School (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 190). These students embodied both the hopes and dilemmas of Japan’s present and future, and some Shin Buddhists sought to provide the religio-moral leadership necessary to help the youth navigate between the two.

Chikazumi saw the Kyūdō Kaikan as a response to the deteriorating morality of the early twentieth century in Japan, a time when individuals with “sincere character” (*shinshi kifū*) were “exceedingly scarce” (*sukoburu toboshiku*) and “moral restraint” was increasingly lax (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904a, 46). He commented that the “hearts of those youth aiming to get a grasp on solid [religious] convictions very often harbor anguish” in the midst of modern society (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904a, 46). After all, those seekers, like their peers across Japan, held social concerns, internationally informed perspectives, and an awareness of the individual that distinguished them from their parents’ generation but left many without a moral anchor (Oka 1982). Chikazumi, like many public figures, evinced an acute concern for the fate of the entire generation of Japanese youth that had come of age in the last two decades of the Meiji era—the so-called “agonized youth,” or *hanmon seinen* (Bernstein 1976, 29).

Building upon the success of his small dormitory, the Kyūdō Gakusha, Chikazumi’s Kyūdō Kaikan would be a safe, friendly, and spiritually fulfilling place for those lost youth. “Earnest people” (*majime naru hitobito*) would gather together inside, protected from the insincerity that abounded in the capital. The Kyūdō Kaikan would be a space in which youth, confronted by the various religious and moral dilemmas that faced the young intelligentsia of the late Meiji period, could “converse about the faith problems hidden in their hearts” and “together pursue spiritual training” (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904a, 6). Through the transformative religious experience and interactions taking place inside, these youth would even become capable of

turning their attention toward providing comfort and peace to the agonized people of the world (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 195). By the time that Chikazumi began to write about expanding the Kyūdō Gakusha, he felt that the establishment of the Kyūdō Kaikan, and the realization of these objectives, had become “an urgent need” (*shōbi no kyū*) (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904a, 46).

This need stemmed as much from the priest’s spiritual objectives as it did from the spatial limitations that beset his ministry at the Kyūdō Gakusha. As his son later recalled, within the first years of the Kyūdō Gakusha, it became necessary to knock down the walls of two rooms in order to accommodate the growing crowds of attendees that came to hear Chikazumi’s *Nichiyō kōwa* (Sunday lectures) (Chikazumi Shinkan 1987). The small audience, originally composed of the ten male boarders that Chikazumi lodged in the dilapidated house, quickly swelled so that people had to sit in the hallway and out on the veranda. The building had been poorly maintained since the preaching station’s original priest, Chikazumi’s senior Ōtani colleague Kiyozawa Manshi (1863–1903), passed away the year before. It was therefore ill equipped to accommodate such growth. Reportedly, it was the sight of listeners being repeatedly crowded out from under the eaves by fellow listeners, seeking to stay dry on rainy days, that prompted Chikazumi to consider creating an auxiliary religious gathering space (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 35).

Once he made up his mind, Chikazumi and forty-eight like-minded supporters began to raise the funds necessary to build the Kyūdō Kaikan (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904a, 47). A team of eight supporters traveled all over Japan to expand the quest for donations (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 69). The promotion team included prison scholar and bureaucrat Ogawa Shigejirō (1863–1925); educator and politician Kashiwara Buntarō (1869–1936); former minister of education and Seijo Gakuen founder, Sawayanagi Masatarō (1865–1927); educator and president of both Tohoku Imperial University and Kyoto Imperial University, Arita Hiro; Pure Land priest Ōkusa Keiji (1858–1912); Tokyo city councilman and railroad entrepreneur Nishizawa Kenshichi; and others. In an act of generosity, the architect, Takeda Goichi, provided his drawing and planning services for the Kyūdō Kaikan free of charge (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 70). Conveniently, the plot adjacent to the Kyūdō Gakusha lay vacant, providing an ideal location for Chikazumi and his supporters to put these funds and goodwill to use in the creation of a new Buddhist gathering space in the capital.

Locating the Kyūdō Kaikan

An integral part of Chikazumi's vision for a new and dynamic Buddhism was its location. In many ways, the new national capital was becoming the focal point for Japanese religion. Within the new imperial government, the Department of Divinity; its successor, the Ministry of Divinity; this ministry's successor, the Ministry of Education; and the contemporaneous Office of Shintō Affairs all sought to centralize nationwide authority over religious teachings and practice in the capital (Hardacre 1989, 30). At the center of the administration's relatively short-lived Great Promulgation Campaign stood the Great Teaching Institute (Daikyōin), which was located neither in the symbolic center of the new state religion at Ise nor in the traditional heartland of Japanese religion in Kyoto, but in Tokyo (Hardacre 1986, 44–45).

Of course, practitioners of Japanese religion were also actively involved in appropriating the capital as a national religious center. In the academic world, Buddhist priests took up positions at the new Imperial University, increasing the visibility and legitimacy of Buddhism during the 1880s and 1890s. One might have expected Higashi Honganji priest Nanjō Bun'yū (1849–1927) and Nishi Honganji priest Takakasu Junjirō (1866–1945), who both studied Sanskrit and religion with renowned Indologist Max Müller for several years at Oxford, to return to Kyoto, then the nerve center of Buddhism in Japan (Ketelaar 1990, 126). Instead, they both became professors at the Imperial University in Tokyo (Dumoulin 1990, 415). Japanese spiritual leaders were also making their way to the capital. While Protestant pastors had been among the first to shift their emphasis from the Kansai area toward the Kantō, they were by no means alone (Drummond 1971; Washington 2010). During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Buddhist leaders also began to focus on Tokyo.

The Shinshū Ōtani sect set the stage for the creation of a Buddhist gathering space in a propitious location of Tokyo that provided the same types of access and opportunities that were benefiting Protestant churches. In 1898, the abbot of Higashi Honganji temple purchased a poorly maintained building in Hongō Ward's Morikawa-chō. The basic site contained a simple two-story wooden military police station and an adjacent horse-riding ground (Chikazumi Shinkan 1987). From this humble base, the organization held the high aim of enabling outspoken priests to reach the students and graduates of the Tokyo Imperial University, located a couple of blocks away. By the time that Chikazumi took over the site in 1902, the shabby structure in

Hongō had begun to receive new life in the student-filled neighborhood. Kiyozawa, had transformed the dilapidated building into a functional Buddhist dormitory and preaching station with a growing body of devoted boarders and followers.

In his efforts to broaden the membership base of his reform movement, the Kōkōdō, beyond Kyoto, Kiyozawa and the Ōtani organization had chosen their location wisely (Amstutz 1997). Kiyozawa had arrived in Tokyo's student-filled Hongō Ward with a message that greatly appealed to a politically frustrated young intelligentsia whose efforts to ensure true democracy a place in the new imperial order had failed. His emphasis on inner spirituality, individualism, and idealism offered an alternative form of agency and hope that attracted many within the educated elite of the capital (Ienaga 1965, 24). Kiyozawa has even been credited with bringing new life to the politics, doctrine, and philosophy of Buddhism, and both the Kōkōdō and its Tokyo base were key elements in these accomplishments (Staggs 1983, 252). The station soon became a dormitory in addition to a space for sermons and teachings and remained as such until Kiyozawa's untimely incapacitation and death from tuberculosis in 1902.

Chikazumi took over the Morikawa-chō location in 1902 and in many ways carried on the legacy and built upon the foundation left behind by Kiyozawa. Following Kiyozawa's intellectual path (and stepping into his footprints at the old Kōkōdō dormitory), the young priest used Christianity as a model to reform Buddhism (Ienaga 1965, 26).² Although the Kōkōdō moved elsewhere in Hongō ward, Chikazumi clearly appreciated the emplacement and evident dynamism of that particular spot and chose to stay. Given that he wrote of the importance of "building a meeting hall in the center of the capital" in 1904, it is not surprising that Chikazumi decided to maintain the old dormitory and erect a new kind of Buddhist gathering space there (Chikazumi Jōkan 1904b, 196). In 1902, the dormitory became the Kyūdō Gakusha (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 34). From its establishment and expansion to the final realization of the Kyūdō Kaikan in 1915 and beyond, Chikazumi sought to reach and affect the hearts and minds of Tokyo's educated elite through that site in Morikawa-chō.

In establishing and expanding the dormitory and later the adjacent new religious gathering space, Chikazumi made location-related choices that closely mirrored those of some of Japan's best-known Protestant pastors. Just as the Protestant movement stayed connected with Tokyo Imperial University's male students through their Kirisuto Kyō Seinenkai (Young Men's

Christian Association) in Hongō, the Kyūdō Gakusha gave Shin Buddhism a foothold among the nation's brightest students.³ Within only two years, Chikazumi began to envision a larger gathering space that could rival the Protestant churches nearby as well.

Although the Canadian Methodist pastor Charles Eby had completed the Hongō Tabernacle in 1890 in Yushima (Ion 1990, 100), the Yushima neighborhood's Hongō Church represented a much more significant competitor for Chikazumi. Ebina Danjō and his congregation had completed the construction of the large and successful Hongō Kaidō (Hongō Meeting Hall) on Ikizaka in 1901, and this building was the successor to their sizable previous church building in Takekawa, which had been destroyed in the Hongō Fire of 1898 (Yumichō Hongō Kyōkai 1986, 25). By the end of the Russo-Japanese War, when Chikazumi first launched the Kyūdō Kaikan project, Ebina's Hongō Church attracted over five hundred attendees each week (Kozaki 1933, 356). In those pews were the same elite students and recent graduates from the nation's best secondary schools and institutions of higher education that Chikazumi targeted as well.

Ebina Danjō, Chikazumi Jōkan, and other religious leaders deliberately planted their new religious gathering spaces in the Hongō Ward of Tokyo (figure 1). This was a vibrant, dynamic collection of neighborhoods that housed not only Tokyo Imperial University, but also the First Higher School, a preparatory high school for students seeking admission to the Imperial University. While these institutions accepted only male students, other schools in Hongō, such as the Japan Higher Girls' School and the Japan Women's Teaching College, catered to young women. Adding to Hongō's cosmopolitan feel were the dozens of leading scholars from Japan and other countries who taught and resided in the area (Roden 1980). Historical novelist Shiba Ryōtarō walks the reader past the homes of zoologist Edward S. Morse and art scholar Ernest Fenellosa, for instance, in his *Hongō kaiwai* (Hongō neighborhood) (Shiba 2005, 22–23). Clearly, Hongō was an ideal area for elite students as well as for those soliciting their attention. Chikazumi and his Protestant counterparts were very much aware, however, that getting their attention required not only finding the right location but placing at that location the type of building that could attract and serve them.

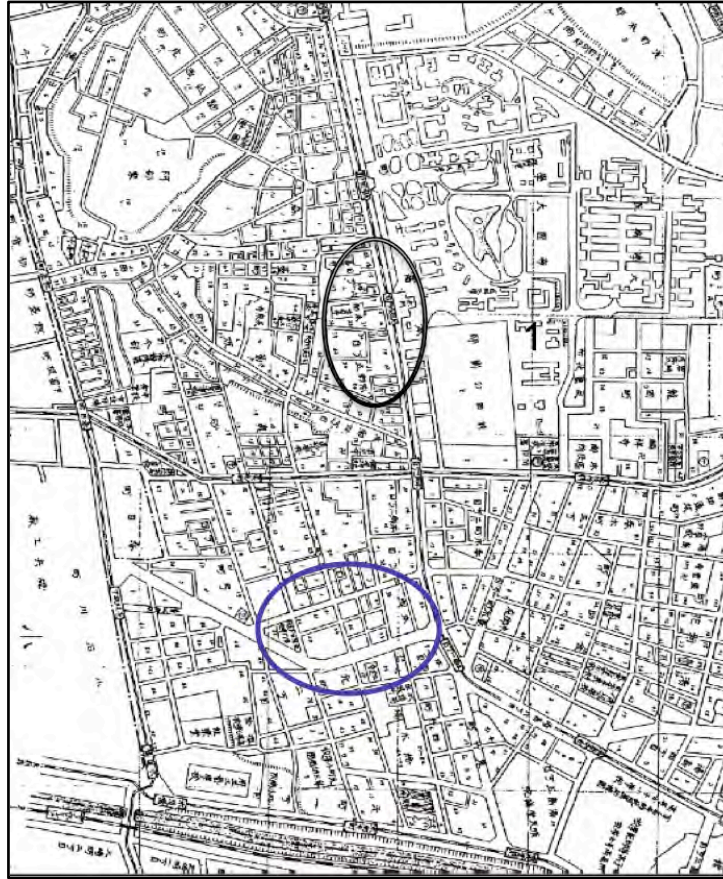


Figure 1. “Hongō Ward” Kokudo Chiri-in. *Source*: Japan Geographical Survey Institute, 1931. The “1” marks Tokyo Imperial University; Morikawa neighborhood is circled in black; Yumichō neighborhood is circled in purple.

Shaping the Kyūdō Kaikan

In addition to strategically locating his future Kyūdō Kaikan in close proximity to many of Japan’s most promising students, Chikazumi sought to create a distinct, attractive, and functional religious gathering space. By creating a new Buddhist space, he also exempted the building from many of the restrictions that the imperial government had placed upon existing religious spaces in Japan. Among Japan’s religions, Buddhism had suffered acutely due to the efforts of the administration to demonstrate its power over religion and to situate State Shintō above all of its ideological competitors. Through the extensive *shinbutsu bunri* policy implemented immediately after the Meiji Restoration, the state separated Shintō and Buddhism while appropriating the authority to regulate religious institutions (Grapard 1984). Even more

important for temple Buddhism was the nationwide anti-Buddhist (*haibutsu kishaku*) frenzy that came in this policy's wake, which resulted in the destruction of thousands of temples (Ketelaar 1990). The imperial government made even more explicit its capacity to determine the fate of religious buildings and sites with the 1897 Koshaji Hozon Hō (Law for the Protection of Ancient Shrines and Temples). The law brought the restoration of all Buddhist and Shinto religious sites that were over four hundred years old, associated with the emperor, or deemed nationally significant directly under the aegis of the national government (Wendelken 1996, 34). Implicit, but well understood by Buddhist clerics, was the state's power to impede the repair or redevelopment of existing Buddhist and Shinto sites according to their strategic utility to the national administration (Thal 2005).

The new religious gathering space that Chikazumi imagined, however, would be subject neither to this preservation law nor to the direct repercussions of the *shinbutsu bunri* measures. The Kyūdō Kaikan, like the Protestant churches of Chikazumi's rivals in the capital, would be a modern, impressive, and functional religious gathering space. That space would enable temple Buddhism to establish and amplify its contact with the greater Japanese society. At the same time, its mere existence would affirm the right of religious leaders and practitioners to creatively shape and utilize religious space in Japan. To realize such a vision, forward-thinking religious leaders like Chikazumi and Tokyo's most popular Protestant pastors sought out architects with a proven ability to think beyond the traditional parameters and types of Japanese design.

The Shin priest turned toward the foremost Western-style Japanese architects and engineers. Chikazumi chose to work with Takeda Goichi, an up-and-coming recent architecture graduate of Tokyo Imperial University who would later become a founding member of Kyoto University's Department of Architecture.⁴ Even in the early twentieth century, however, he was already a well-traveled, modern, and unconventional architect. For these reasons he proved to be a good match for Chikazumi's vision and objectives. Takeda completed the Kyūdō Kaikan in 1915. When Chikazumi and a host of student boarders unveiled it, they revealed a building unlike any existing Buddhist temple in Japan—one truly capable of attracting and hosting the nation's most promising students.

Takeda represented an ideal architect for that undertaking for several reasons. First, he had trained at Tokyo Imperial University with the two most prominent modern Western-style

architects in Japan, Tatsuno Kingo (1854–1919) and English architect Josiah Conder (1852–1920) (Tseng 2004), and was therefore well versed in the history, techniques, and aesthetics of Western architecture. This background is evident in both the exterior and interior design of the Kyūdō Kaikan. Second, he had taken the Imperial University's first courses on Japanese architecture taught by imperial household carpenter Kigo Kiyoyoshi (1845–1907)⁵, and was therefore knowledgeable about and comfortable with using traditional Japanese carpentry and materials in a modern context (Wendelken 1996, 30, 33). His experience with and appreciation of Japanese woodworking was crucial in his active quest for a style suited to the cosmopolitanism and modernity of imperial Japan and played an important role in the realization of the Kyūdō Kaikan (Sand 2004, 114–117). Finally, having just returned from a government-sponsored observational tour of the West, Takeda, like Chikazumi, was particularly aware of the architectural creativity and syncretism blossoming in Western Europe and the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. In particular, although Takeda traveled to Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Italy, his stay in Vienna was transformative and would exert an important and visible influence on the shape of the Kyūdō Kaikan (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 64).

Chikazumi chose an architect for his project who, in many ways, shared a great deal with the architects that Protestant pastors were choosing for their churches in Tokyo. The head of the Department of Architecture at the Imperial University—the faculty leader responsible for bringing Takeda's mentor, the famous carpenter Kigo, to the institution—was also busy building new religious spaces during the Meiji period. Having studied with and then succeeded Josiah Conder as department head, Tatsuno Kingo was himself a good candidate for modern, urban, Western-style design, and the leaders and members of the aforementioned Hongō Church hired him to build their church in 1890 (Yumichō Hongō Kyōkai 1986, 25). In 1908, Protestant pastor Kozaki Hiromichi (1856–1938) and his Reinanzaka Church congregation acquired Tatsuno's services for their new church in the Akasaka area just southwest of the Imperial Palace (Ii 1979, 230). Furthermore, Tatsuno, like Takeda, trusted one of Japan's most prominent Western-style engineering firms—the Akasaka-based Toda Gumi, headed by Toda Rihei (1852–1920)—to construct both churches (Kozaki 1933; Chikazumi Yōko, 2008, 70). While the connections between these individuals are of interest to the historian, they also help explain the appearance of parallel architectural elements between Tokyo's Protestant churches and the Kyūdō Kaikan.

These similarities are all the more interesting because of the strong animosity that Chikazumi evinced toward Japanese Christianity.

Clearly sharing similar concerns and ambitions with Japanese Protestant pastors, Chikazumi managed to create a new, impressive religious space that defied not only traditional Japanese architectural and religious norms but also the conventional categories prevalent in the West. When completed in late 1915, Takeda's Kyūdō Kaikan was a forty-five-foot tall, two-story structure that borrowed from several distinct historical and contemporary architectural styles (figures 2 and 3). True to his strong identification with the Secession Movement⁶, Takeda's design was eclectic inside and out. Certain elements, such as the red bricks he used for the masonry and the hammer beams that supported the roof, were squarely within the fashionable modern design trends in imperial Japan (Coaldrake 1996, ch. 9; Finn 1995, 75). In the *taikaidō* (great meeting hall) that constituted the focal point of the Kyūdō Kaikan, Takeda included a gallery along the front and side walls that was more reminiscent of Protestant church designs in the United States, England, and Japan than a Buddhist temple.



Figure 2 (left): Kyūdō Kaikan just after completion in January 1916. *Source*: Chikazumi Jōkan (1916a, ii).

Figure 3 (right). Kyūdō Kaikan rebuilt in 1996. Photo taken by the author.

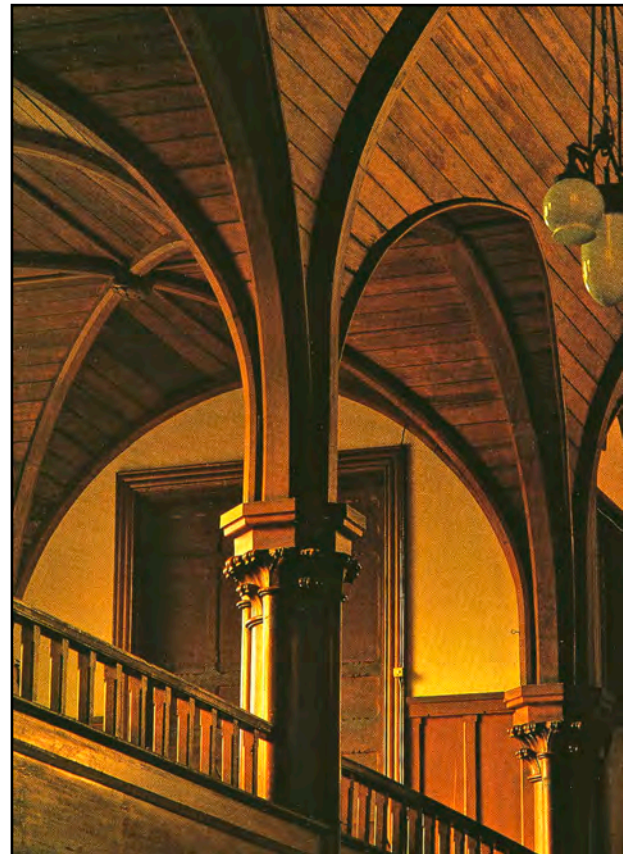
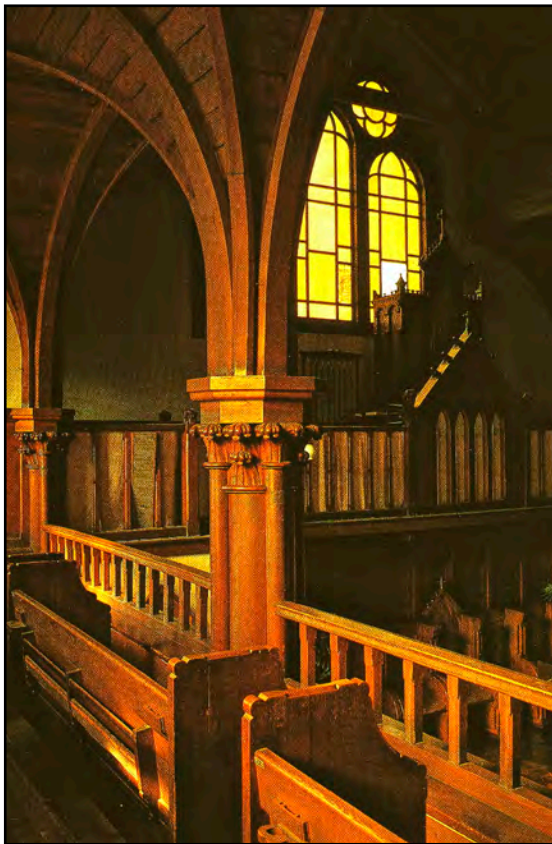
In fact, one did not need to leave Japan or even Tokyo to find a Protestant church whose design resonated with that of the Kyūdō Kaikan. The new Buddhist space completed in 1915 by Takeda was in many ways comparable to the Reinanzaka Church completed by Tatsuno only two years later (figure 4). An analysis of their designs reveals the use of similar techniques and the inclusion of similar types of space for the achievement of similar aims. The red brick exteriors of both buildings made for a clean and simple appearance well suited to a Protestant pastor who favored low-church architecture or a Shin priest seeking to appropriate Western forms and institutional organization to reshape Japanese Buddhism. Inside, from floor to ceiling, Reinanzaka Church's *reihaidō* (worship hall) shared many elements with the Kyūdō Kaikan (figure 5). For instance, the large hall of both sites contained a three-sided gallery.



Figure 4 (left). Reinanzaka Church exterior, built in 1917. Photo courtesy of Kojima Akio.
Figure 5 (right). Reinanzaka Church *reihaidō*. Photo courtesy of Kojima Akio.

Furthermore, drawing the attention of churchgoers in Reinanzaka's *reihaidō* upward was a complex and unusual roof that, like Takeda's structure, reflected the architectural ingenuity and creativity of Japan's best-known native Western-style architects. The intricate wooden ceiling of

Reinanzaka's *reihaidō* included a five-sided arched roof above the central aisle of the nave, supported by a special wooden truss configuration of multiweb, radiating member beams, a barrel-vault-type arched surface extending outward from the central aisle, and rib-vault ceilings above the side galleries (figures 5, 6, 7). Innovating in a different way, Takeda implemented a double hammer-beam roof design in the Kyūdō Kaikan's *taikaidō* (figure 8) that did away with arched or curved diagonal tie beams altogether (Chikazumi Yōko 2008, 65) (figures 8, 9, and 10). Impressed by the thinness and narrowness of the wood used in the hammer-beam roofs of the expansive exhibition halls at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, Takeda decided to incorporate a derivative design into his new project. While the creative roofs and red facades of the Kyūdō Kaikan and Reinanzaka Church point to commonalities, with the former, Chikazumi and Takeda nevertheless realized a building that was identifiable as a Japanese Buddhist space.



Figures 6 and 7. Reinanzaka Church *reihaidō*. Photos courtesy of Kojima Akio.



Figures 8 (top), 9 (bottom left), and 10 (bottom right). Kyūdō Kaikan *taikaidō*. Photos taken by the author.

In designing the Kyūdō Kaikan, Takeda included a few small but recognizable Buddhist elements. Two six-sided *tōrō* (Buddhist lanterns) sat atop the square engaged columns that flanked the white concrete portico of the building. Carved into the same semicircular forms that stood underneath the lanterns and capped those engaged columns were two ring-shaped depressions that also connoted the Kyūdō Kaikan's Buddhist associations (figure 11). Inside the *taikaidō*, the ornate wooden *rokkakudō* (lit. six-corner or six-angle temple) stood more than ten feet in height on a demi-decagonal raised wooden platform projecting out from the rear wall (see figure 8). This hexagonal structure, like dozens of other *rokkakudō* throughout Japan, contains an

image of the Goddess of Mercy, Kannon Bodhisattva, and both imitates and evokes the original *rokkakudō* of Imperial Prince Shōtoku. It was in this temple that Shinran (1173–1263), the founder of Jōdō Shinshu Buddhism, received the revelation that set him on the path to enlightenment and to eventually developing the strand of Buddhism practiced and preached by Chikazumi.⁷ In addition, the encircled *manji* (left-facing swastika) pattern forged in the wrought-iron railing that ran along the full length of the gallery was a clear a Buddhist symbol (visible in figures 8 and 9). Although attendees were seated in the *taikaidō* in church-style pews (figure 12), these other elements dramatically underlined the Buddhist nature of the Kyūdō Kaikan. Equipped thus, the building that Takeda designed was prepared to attract the young Japanese educated elite and to facilitate the discussion, reflection, and action that Chikazumi hoped would revitalize Japanese Buddhism.



Figure 11. Kyūdō Kaikan exterior. Photo taken by author.

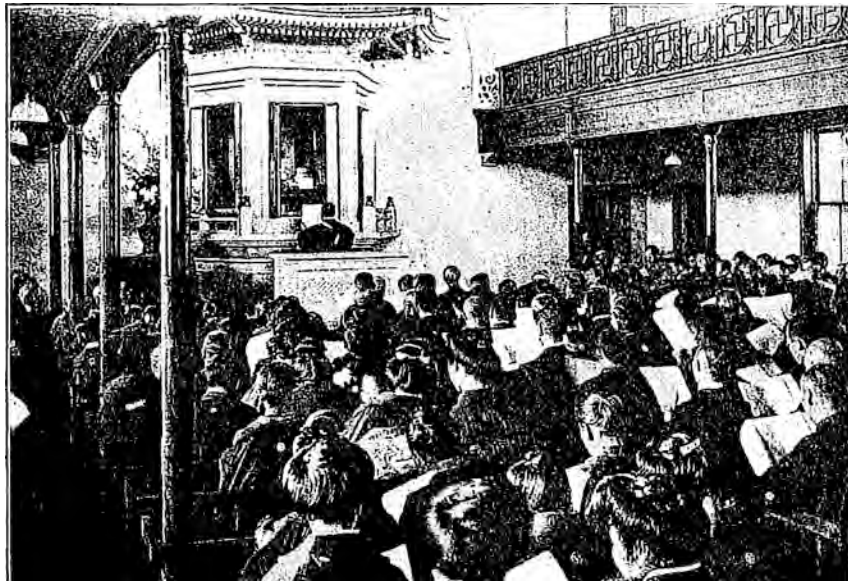


Figure 12. Kyūdō kaikan *taikaidō* opening ceremony, 1916. *Source*: Chikazumi Jōkan (1916a, iii).

Epilogue: Operating the Kyūdō Kaikan

Well before the establishment of the Kyūdō Kaikan, dozens of students were already drawn to the original Kyūdō Gakusha. Feminist journalist Hiratsuka Raichō (1886–1971) recalled that many went to “Chikazumi Jōkan’s house in Hongō Morikawa-chō to hear his lectures on [Shinran’s] *Tannishō*,” (Hiratsuka 2006, 76). Students like future Christian pastor Kamegai Ryōun (1888–1973) spent years living in the Kyūdō Gakusha at the end of the Meiji period, “receiving his teaching on matters of faith” (Kamegai Ryōun 1922, 81). With the completion of the new building, however, the profile of this headquarters for reformist Buddhism in Tokyo rose significantly. Those who had helped raise funds for the building, like scholar-educators Murakami Senjō (1851–1929) and Nanjō Bun’yū, finally had a space in which to address the youth of the capital. They were joined by the renowned Buddhist scholar Inoue Enryō (1858–1919) of Tokyo Imperial University. Inoue described the modern building as a “splendid hall” (*rippa-na kaidō*), while also affirming its identity as a real Shinshū temple (Inoue 1916, 20, 23).

As is clear from the photos of the first gathering inside, these scholars and priests attracted a considerable audience, which finally had a place to sit (figure 12). Listening in the

audience were students like Miyazawa Kenji (1896–1933), destined for fame as a poet and author, future leading philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (1897–1945), and others (Iwata 2010a; Iwata 2010b). Chikazumi and various student members like Miki and Miyazawa also wrote and distributed the religious journal *Kyūdō* from that location after its completion (Ikeda 1987; Ward 2010). In the early Shōwa era, the *Kyūdō Kaikan* became the base for Chikazumi’s Shin reform movement as well. At the core of the activities for attendees of the *Kyūdō Kaikan* were the regular weekly meetings in the *taikaidō*, including the Saturday lecture at 7 A.M., Sunday school at 8 A.M., and the Sunday lecture at 9 A.M. From this base, Chikazumi and the attendees coordinated the *Kyūdō Kai* meetings that occurred on a weekly and monthly basis in the Kudanzaka and Nihonbashi areas as well (Chikazumi Jōkan 1916b, 10). The priest used these lectures to preach about spiritual remedies to the everyday problems of Japan’s new generation, encouraging his listeners to “sympathize with the anguish of modern youth” (Chikazumi Jōkan 1916a, 11).

Although Protestant Christianity in Tokyo, with its new socioreligious spaces, had been much quicker to target Japan’s young educated elite, the new Buddhist reform movement was not without resources and strategies of its own. The *Kyūdō Kaikan* and the *Kyūdō Gakusha* constituted Buddhism’s modern, youth-oriented response to the changing times. The new religious gathering space, which looked and functioned in many ways like the very Protestant churches that Chikazumi so strongly opposed, clearly took the observation and appropriation of Western forms to a new level. Doing so, however, enabled Chikazumi to successfully actualize his vision for a new Buddhist gathering space in Tokyo that could attract the brightest and most promising youth in the city, and significantly impact their religious and intellectual development.

Although Chikazumi’s project did not inspire the creation of new Buddhist spaces and socioreligious interactions on a national scale, its significance in imperial Japan and in current historiography must be noted. The *Kyūdō Kaikan* freed temple Buddhism from many of the rules on and repercussions of government policy toward religion and also from its reputation for detachment and sociopolitical isolation. Through the building and events occurring inside, Chikazumi’s brand of socially aware Buddhism managed to affect some of the ways in which Japanese believers perceived and took action in the secular realm. Finally, the priest and his chosen architect, Takeda, erected a building that confirmed the compatibility of preserving

national cultural characteristics and adopting Western models. The accomplishment thus took a conclusion that government officials had recognized and acted upon in their own pursuits for over half of a century and applied it to the religious realm. Japanese Protestantism, itself occupied with demonstrating the potential accordance between Western ideas and Japanese essence, actively, if disparagingly, took note. Kozaki Hiromichi, for instance, recalled that on Sundays Chikazumi “seldom [had] a congregation of more than a hundred” (Kozaki 1933, 216–217). Placing the pastor’s prejudices aside, this statement attests to the fact that Chikazumi could draw together a hundred of Japan’s most educated and ambitious young men and women on a weekly basis. The statement provides evidence that Buddhism’s attempt at reform and revitalization had not been unsuccessful.

Furthermore, the work of reflecting upon and investigating the uses and greater impact of the Kyūdō Kaikan has only just begun. The full extent to which the Kyūdō Kaikan fulfilled its purpose, as well as the nature of the messages being propagated inside and the activities going on therein, remain only partially evident. What is evident is that many of the elite members of Japan’s new middle class found this priest and his message convincing and relevant. Scholarship drawn from newly available materials that have become increasingly accessible in the past couple of years only continue to support this conclusion. Using these resources, Oomi Toshihiro, Iwata Fumiaki, and others have already made great progress in laying the foundation for more substantial research concerning the building’s function in and impact upon imperial Japan. In this paper, I have sought to demonstrate the importance of the meeting hall that Chikazumi spoke out about and worked so persistently to see through to completion. I have also aimed to identify and describe the unexpected commonalities between Chikazumi’s strategies and those of Buddhism’s archrival, Protestant Christianity. Finally, I have attempted to draw the attention of the academic community outside Japan to this ongoing research project and to provide clear evidence for the necessity of its continuation.

Garrett Washington is visiting assistant professor in history at the College of Wooster in Ohio.

Notes

1. For more on the reform efforts of priests in the Ōtani sect of the Higashi Honganji organization, see Wakimoto (1968).

2. On the greater trend of reforming Buddhism based on the Christian model among the movement surrounding the journal *New Buddhism*, see Thelle (1987, ch. 12).
3. On the Tokyo YMCA, established in 1880 by Mori Arinori and chaired by Kozaki Hiromichi, see Scheiner (1970, 110–111) and Iglehart (1959, 59). On the importance of the YMCA in the Taishō and early Shōwa periods, see Smith (1972).
4. For more on Takeda, see Hakubutsukan Meiji Mura (1987).
5. On Kigo Kiyoyoshi's courses at the Imperial University, see Inaba (1987).
6. For more on the Secessionist Movement in architecture that sought to popularize the use of simple geometric forms in architecture at the turn of the twentieth century and “the Secession building,” where artists and architects promoting this style congregated, see Topp (2004).
7. For this story and its importance to Shinshū, see Lee (2007, 11–21). For a basic introduction to Shinran, see Dobbins (1989, 1–3).

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