Syncretism chapter in
A Passion for Japan
by Steve McCarty

University of Hyōgo
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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.
Why Japan? Formative Years from Boston to Honolulu
Glimpse of a Promising Research Area: Japanese Fusion of Religions
Moving to Japan
Playing Baseball for Language Fluency and Acculturation
Teaching English
Marriage and Family Life
Intercultural Communication and Bilingualism
The Pilgrimage Island of Shikoku
Buddhism and Shinto
Major Sites of Buddhist-Shinto Syncretism
A Synthesis of Asian Religions in a Mandala of Mountains
Notes [References]
About the Author

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
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