

A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God at Jonathan Edwards Center Japan*

ANRI MORIMOTO

It is indeed with great pleasure that I welcome you all and officially announce the beginning of the first conference on Jonathan Edwards to be held in Japan and in Asia. My name is Anri Morimoto, Director of the Jonathan Edwards Center Japan, here at International Christian University. Since this is meant to be the inaugural conference to celebrate the opening of this Center, allow me to explain in a few words how this Center and this conference came to be.

The title of my opening remark is now called, *“A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God at Jonathan Edwards Center Japan.”*

I believe it was the Summer of 2012 when I received an email from Dr. Ken Minkema of Yale University, asking me about the possibility of setting up a Global Center of Jonathan Edwards Studies in Japan. Ken showed me a surprising set of data using Google Analysis: it showed the number of times people accessed the Yale Edwards Center site. It indicated a strong surge of interest in Edwards in Japan.

Table 1 shows the actual number of rates by country. The United States comes of course at the top by far, then comes the UK, and then Japan comes in third, surpassing even Canada and South Korea. Without counting the

* This is a transcript of the “Opening Remark” of the International Conference on Jonathan Edwards held on the campus of International Christian University, Tokyo, March 25-27, 2016, with the theme: “The Transcultural Impact of Jonathan Edwards.” As Director of the Jonathan Edwards Center Japan located on campus, I am thankful to the Institute of Christianity and Culture for printing this transcript for official record of the conference.

United States, Japan accounts for roughly 15% of international access counts. The breakdown from within Japan, as you can see in Table 2, shows that it is not limited to Tokyo alone. It is virtually from all over Japan.

Site Visits Yale Center (2011/9/1-2012/8/31)	
United States	183,630
United Kingdom	7,395
Japan	6,046
Canada	5,885
South Korea	4,422
Australia	3,547
Germany	3,317
Russia	2,995
Brazil	2,967
India	2,893

Table 1

Access from Japan (2011/9/1-2012/8/31)	
Tokyo	2,811
Osaka	451
Kanagawa	410
Aichi	214
Saitama	175
Chiba	168
Fukuoka	160
Shizuoka	152
Hokkaido	150
Hyogo	138

Table 2

I started to think seriously about establishing a Global Center. It would be no doubt a great honor for us to have one in Japan, the first ever in Asia, in addition to those in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Hungary, Poland, South Africa, and one in Midwest America (Fig. 1)¹⁾. It would also do much good to enhance the academic profile of our university, if the Center was to be hosted on our campus here.

But there was one concern. Here I need to be very explicit, for the record, because of my administrative position in this university. As it happened, I was, and still am, Vice President for Academic Affairs. In no way did I want to make an impression of taking advantage of my position in setting up the Center out of my private academic interest.

So I applied for outside funding from JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), a nation-wide organization that provides “Kaken-hi,” Grants-in-Aid on a very competitive basis. It was only after I secured a grant in 2013 that I began to seek my university’s approval to establish the Center. So there are no financial complications whatsoever with the university. This Center is self-standing and operated independently, with no budget coming from the university. Thanks to the understanding of the

1) Jonathan Edwards Center (<http://edwards.yale.edu/>).



Fig. 1

other members of the administration, especially my good friend President Junko Hibiya, ICU and Yale University came to a mutual agreement, and voilà, we now have this Center.

The purpose of JEC Japan, as announced on our website²⁾, is to promote research on Jonathan Edwards, early American and other related studies, with the help of researchers and scholars across institutions in Japan and Asia. I am thankful for the support and contribution by the three other members of the Center in particular.

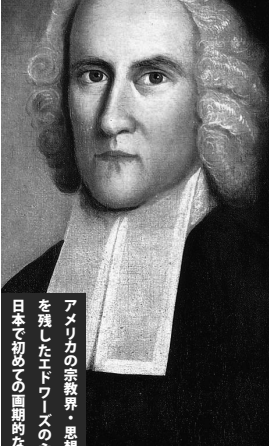
Dr. Shitsuyo Masui, who will be presenting a paper this morning, is a well-known scholar in the field of Puritan studies in Japan, and now heads the Department of American studies at Sophia University, an excellent Jesuit school in Tokyo.

2) Jonathan Edwards Center Japan (<https://sites.google.com/a/info.icu.ac.jp/jecjapan-en/>).

Dr. Bruce Davidson, who is also presenting a paper this morning, is professor of theology and education at Hokusei Gakuin University in Sapporo. During the early stages of preparation, I benefited much from his wise counsel many times, and he was kind enough to come down all the way from snowy Hokkaido today.

Dr. Naoki Onishi, my senior colleague here at ICU, has been sort of a mentor to me for many years. Dr. Onishi has been teaching American literature here, and currently chairs the Emily Dickinson Society of Japan. He will be with us for the Asakusa fun trip on Monday, too. These two members are now working very hard translating Edwards into Japanese, Dr. Masui working on the *Faithful Narrative* and other writings related to revivalism, and Dr. Onishi on Edwards's literary works including those on typology and the beauty of nature.

Fig. 2 is the brochure for the translation project, and you can see a small picture of Ken Minkema smiling, and his blurb recommending the publication to all interested Japanese. Seven volumes are scheduled



The Selected Works of Jonathan Edwards

ジョナサン・エドワーズ選集

森本あんり 監修
新教出版社

アメリカの宗教界・思想界に巨大な影響を残したエドワーズの主要著作を収録、日本で初めての画期的な選集。

● 日本語版選集に期待します

ケネス・ミンケマ ◆フェル大学出版局「ジョナサン・エドワーズ著作集」編集者

を敬、ジョナサン・エドワーズの著作集が日本語で読めるようになるのはとても素晴らしいことです。エドワーズは、世界規模の歴史的影響をもった宗教的指導者で、今日も研究者や信者だけでなく、多くの一般読者を引きつけています。その思想は神学から人間論、道徳や美学、教会論、霊的成長、リヴィヴァリズムに至るまで、広く多岐にわたる主題を扱っています。本選集選集を流した日本の方が、エドワーズをより正確な歴史的な文脈に参加され、日本のキリスト教の歴史的理解と今後の発展にどのような貢献ができるかを共に語り合うことができるようになることを切に願っています。

エドワーズ研究の本拠地はフェル大学にあるが、同大学との協定で世界七カ国に「グローバル・センター」が設置されており、日本にもその一つがある。
 ・ジョナサン・エドワーズ・センター Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University <http://edwards.yale.edu/>
 ・ジョナサン・エドワーズ日本センター Jonathan Edwards Center Japan <http://subsite.icu.ac.jp/jecjapan/>

● 全7巻の内容

7	説教集	3	原罪論
6	神学論議集	2	自然神論
5	罪の業の歴史	1	自由意志論
4	大宣報と教会		

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Fig. 2

in projection, and I am happy to announce today that we now have the second volume, fresh off the press. This is the cover of *Freedom of the Will*, translated by Ms. Hisako Shibata, who is also with us today. I would like to congratulate her on this great achievement. It must have been a formidable task to make Edwards sensible, meaningful, and accessible in Japanese. Thank you.

Actually, the first volume is done by Dr. Masatake Okubo, who is also with us today and presenting a paper tomorrow. This is *Original Sin*, published last year for the first time in full Japanese text. As General Editor of this translation project, I was very fortunate to have him to launch the first volume in such an auspicious manner. Perhaps the next volume in coming is *Sermons*, translated by Ms. Mikayo Sakuma, who is also with us today.

The translation project could not have been possible without the brave decision of Shinkyō-Shuppan-sha, the Protestant Publishing Company in Japan. We are very grateful to Mr. Nozomu Kobayashi, President of the company, who took on this unprofitable task of publishing Edwards in Japanese.

I can only admire my Korean friends here, Dr. Jin Lak Lee from Chongshin University and Dr. Hyun Jin Cho from Korean Bible University, as we see many translations coming out in the Korean language. Publishing Edwards would be a little less daunting and inhibitive, if not easier, in a market where there is a strong evangelical church presence.

Now let me briefly explain the theme of this conference. It is “the transcultural impact of Jonathan Edwards.” You may wonder: “the impact of Edwards? Maybe some in Korea, but is there any on Japanese culture?” Before I finished writing my chapter in the book *After Jonathan Edwards*, edited by Doug Sweeney and Oliver Crisp and published by Oxford University Press, I had also thought that the prospect was bleak and unpromising.³⁾ But then I found out about a mysterious book that

3) “An Edwardsian Lost and Found: The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in Asia,”

was published more than seventy years ago in Japanese, arguably the first translation ever in any Asian language. Writing about this mysterious Japanese translation in *After Jonathan Edwards*, I thought that there might be other traces of Edwards detectible and worth pursuing in Japanese and other Asian cultures. We will certainly hear more about it today and tomorrow.



Fig. 3

It was my friend Professor Onishi who passed on to me the information on the existence of a copy of Edwards' Dwight edition that had been in possession of a famous Christian leader of modern Japan. His name is Nijima Jo, also known as Joseph Hardy Neesima (Fig. 3). Born in Edo Japan, Neesima illegally slipped out of the country, sailed to the US, managed to enroll in Amherst College, and graduated with a BA degree. He became a Christian, went on to Andover Seminary to study theology, and became the first Japanese ever to be ordained a Protestant minister, came

back to Japan as a missionary, sent by the American Board. He later founded Doshisha University, an excellent Christian school in Kyoto.

Fig. 4 is the title page of the book, with an enlarged image of his autograph (Fig. 5). Next to it is his Ex Libris (Fig. 6), which says "you may borrow this book from me for 90 days, but make sure you return it by the due date, etc." with his address in Kyoto, where the present Doshisha

Oliver D. Crisp and Douglas A. Sweeney, eds., *After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of New England Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 225-236.

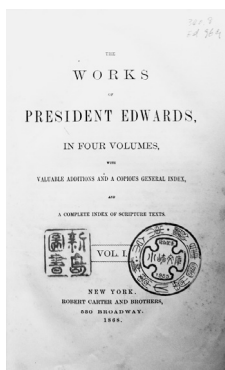


Fig. 4

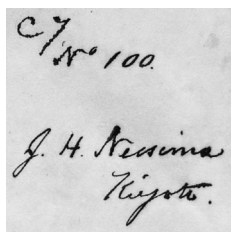


Fig. 5

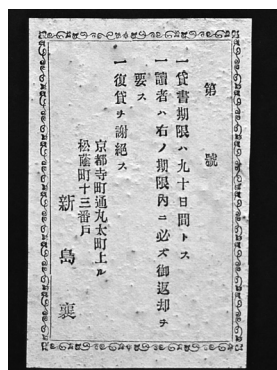


Fig. 6

University campus is roughly located today.

Since this is the first conference in Asia, we tried to invite as many scholars as possible from other parts of Asia. We received inquiries or applications from Singapore, Pakistan, West Africa, Eastern Europe, but their chances of coming did not materialize. Skip Stout and Ken Minkema of the Yale Center, along with Adriaan Neele, were all contemplating, but they also couldn't make it. They kindly wrote us a message instead, which is printed in the conference material in your packet.

To the Conference Attendees,

Greetings to all who are attending the gathering in Tokyo. We deeply regret not being able to be with you all, but family obligations have kept us from attending. We did, however, want to extend our warmest greetings to all who are there, and congratulations to Anri Morimoto and his colleagues upon the inauguration of the Jonathan Edwards Center-Japan. We look forward to working with you in the future, as you officially become part of the worldwide Edwards network. May your time of fellowship together be enjoyable and rewarding.

With warmest regards,
Harry Stout and Ken Minkema

Part of the funding for this conference also came from the Japan ICU Foundation in New York City.⁴⁾ I would like to express my gratitude to its Executive Director, Paul Hastings. Thank you Paul for your support.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to you all. You may not realize this, but your presence here today has a redemptive effect. This small gathering of scholars both from inside Japan and overseas, reminds me that I am still part of the academic world. I am currently buried in my administrative duties. You give me a precious opportunity to be something other than a philistine administrator. The conference thus proved to be my own version of the *"History of the Work of Redemption."* Thank you for redeeming me in such a wonderful way.

A word of explanation, perhaps even apology, might also be due about the timing of the conference. At first we planned to have it right after the Melbourne Conference last summer, as a sequel to it. But with the advice of Ken, Rhys and others, we decided to hold it separately, mostly out of concern for participants' traveling schedules. You don't want to come into the extra hot and humid summer days in Tokyo right after a cool seminar in Australia.

As a result, we scheduled this conference right on Easter weekend. It is blatantly against my creed to have such an event when my church is holding their Easter morning service right next door from this building, but since our university calendar has both Graduation and Matriculation services packed up in such a short period, this was actually the only slot left available.

To make up for it, I asked for divine intervention to bring our cherry blossoms to full bloom, and outside you see my prayers being partly answered. With that note, I'd like to begin our first session for today.

4) Japan ICU Foundation (<http://www.jicuf.org/home>).

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Program:

International Conference on Jonathan Edwards 2016 in Tokyo

March 25th

18:00- Opening Reception

March 26th

Morning (Moderator: Naoki Onishi)

9:00- Opening Remark: Anri Morimoto, “A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in JEC Japan”

9:30- (Keynote 1) Gerald McDermott, “Edwards and Islam: What can we learn? ”

10:30- Bruce Davidson, “Not From Ourselves: Holy Love in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards”

11:30- Shitsuyo Masui, “An Evangelical Ritualization of Death and Dying: Abigail Hutchinson’s Conversion in A Faithful Narrative”

Afternoon (Moderator: Shitsuyo Masui)

13:30- Hyun Jin Cho, “Jonathan Edwards’ Controversy with Antinomians and Its Impact on Korea”

14:30- Jin Lak Lee, “The Lesson of Jonathan Edwards’ Religious Affection for Korean Church”

16:00- Phillip Hussey, “Divine Decrees in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards”

17:00- (Keynote 2) Michael McClymond, “Analogy: A Neglected Theme in

Jonathan Edwards and Its Pertinence to Contemporary Theological Debates”

March 27th

Morning (Moderator: Bruce Davidson)

- 9:30- (Keynote 3) Douglas Sweeney, “The Grand Design of God: Edwards’ Biblical Understanding of the Shape of World History”
- 10:30- Erik Willemsen, “A Greek Edwards? On the Relationship between Plato and Edwards”
- 11:30- Reita Yazawa, “Jonathan Edwards and Petrus van Mastricht: An Inheritance of the Covenant of Redemption”

Afternoon (Moderator: Anri Morimoto)

- 13:30- Daisuke Arie, “Jonathan Edwards’s Critique of ‘The Deceitful Feeling of Liberty’ by Lord Kames in 1757”
- 14:30- Masatake Okubo, “Tokutaro Takakura’s Search for Evangelical Christianity in Japan in the First Half of the 20th Century: With Some References to Jonathan Edwards”
- 16:00- Stacey Silva, “Jonathan Edwards and Public Education: Perception, Propaganda and Anti-Puritanism”
- 18:00- Closing Banquet

March 28th

- 9:00-17:00 Excursion to Asakusa

Some of the conference papers have been published in *Jonathan Edwards Studies*, an online journal published by the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University (<http://jestudies.yale.edu/jes/index.php/journal/index>). I served as special editor for the Fall 2016 issue which featured the Tokyo Conference. Professor Douglas Sweeney kindly offered his presentation to be printed in *Humanities* this issue. As he mentions in the footnote, his paper is an adaptation from a chapter of his recent book, *Edwards the Exegete: Biblical Interpretation and Anglo-Protestant Culture on the Edge of the Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press.