

**Syncretism chapter in
A Passion for Japan
by Steve McCarty**

**University of Hyōgo
Kōbe, July 13, 2022**



McCarty, S. (2022). Discovering Japanese fusion of religions on the pilgrimage island of Shikoku. In J. Rucynski (Ed.), *A passion for Japan: A collection of personal narratives* (pp. 286-299). BlueSky Publishing.

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 Abstract

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.

Chapter sections

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

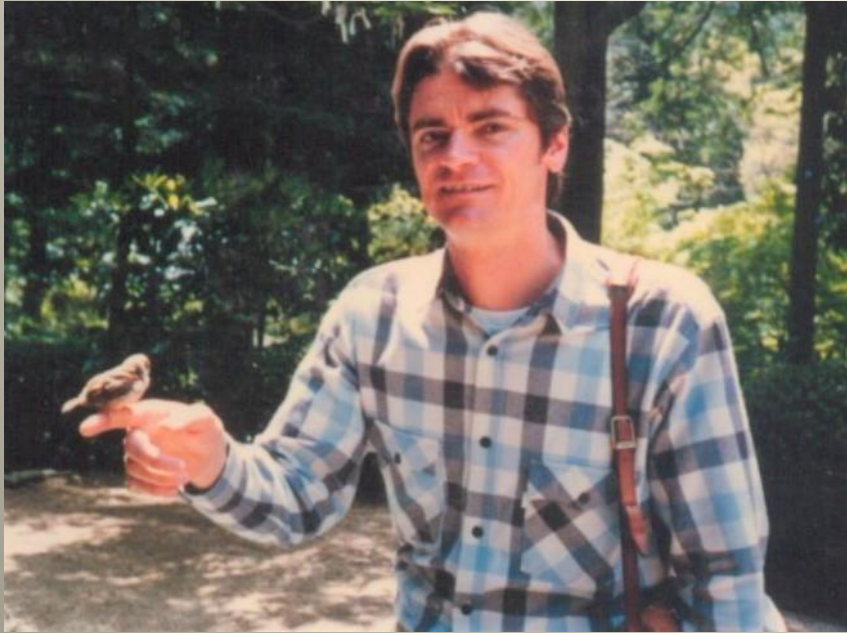
A Synthesis of Asian Religions in a Mandala of Mountains

Notes [References]

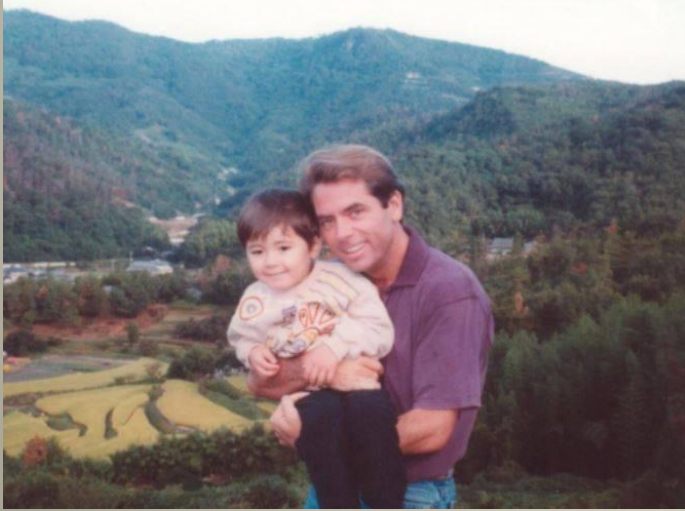
About the Author

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>

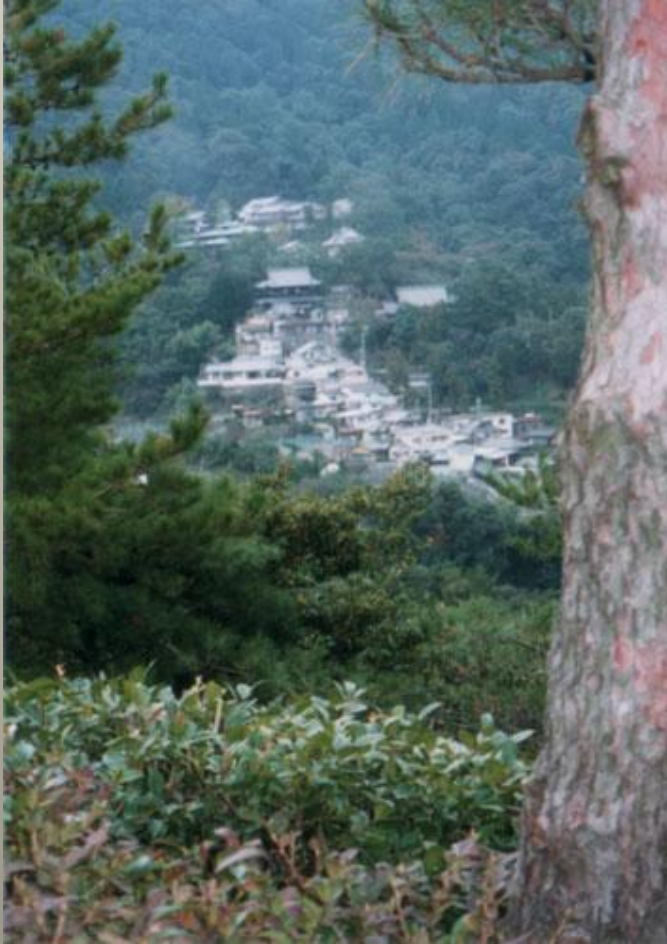
Welcomed to Research the Pilgrimage of Shikoku



Shikoku Daily Life



Iconography of Kompira-san



徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖

祭日由三月十日

岡十月十日

廣波國
金石山
伊里八



徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖
繪者 徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖
刊行 徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖

徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖
繪者 徳島縣阿波國藏山之圖
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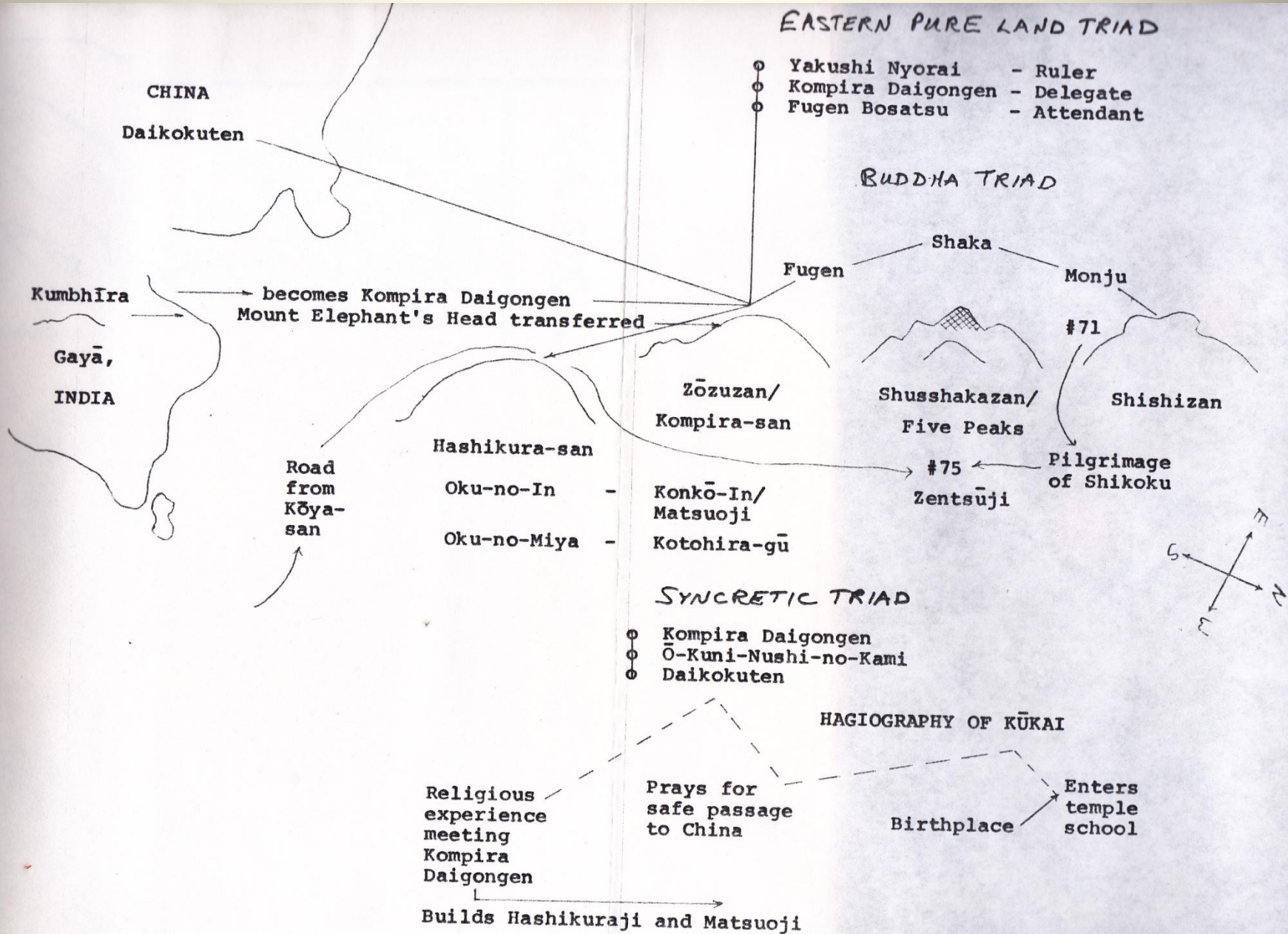


Fig. 30: Diagram of Relations between the Mountains, Divinities and Kūkai

An aerial photograph of a large body of water, possibly a bay or a wide river. The water's surface is highly reflective, showing a vibrant rainbow-like spectrum of colors from purple and blue to yellow and orange. The surrounding land is visible, showing green fields and some urban areas. The overall scene is bright and colorful.

Thank you!

Publications on Japan:

<https://wilmina.academia.edu/SteveMcCarty/Japan>

or <https://japanned.hcommons.org/japanology>

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