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Descriptive Summary

Identifier: ICU.SPCL.KITAGAWAJM

Title: Kitagawa, Joseph M.

Date: 1958-1990

Size: 3.75 linear feet (8 boxes)

Repository: Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract: Joseph M. Kitagawa (b. March 8, 1915, d. October 7, 1992) was a prominent Japanese-American scholar of religion, professor, priest, and author of numerous books and articles. Kitagawa taught at the University of Chicago Divinity School for over thirty years and served the same institution as Dean from 1970-1980. He obtained academic degrees in Japan and in the U.S. Upon his arrival in the U.S., which coincided with the Second World War, he was taken to internment camps for three and a half years in New Mexico and Idaho. The collection documents his academic production and administrative activities, especially in the later stages of his career, and includes manuscript and offprint copies of his articles, chapters, book reviews, and books, the documents related to conferences he led or participated in, and other administrative materials.

Information on Use

Access: The collection is open for research, except Series V, Restricted, which contains budgetary, financial, and personnel information. Records in Series V are restricted for fifty years from date of record creation.

Citation: When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Kitagawa, Joseph M. Papers, [Box #, Folder Title], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note:
Joseph Mitsuo Kitagawa was born in Osaka, Japan on March 8, 1915, son of Chiyokichi Kitagawa, an ordained clergyman, and Kumi (Nozaki) Kitagawa. In 1937, he obtained a BA degree from Rikkyo University in Japan. In 1941, he left Japan for the United States with the intention to pursue further studies on the West Coast. He first enrolled in the Church Divinity
School of the Pacific. After a while, he was transferred from his residence in Berkeley, CA to the Department of Justice Detention Camp in Santa Fe, NM as an “enemy alien” and later to the Army Internment Camp in Hunt, Idaho, where Japanese immigrants and their American-born children were imprisoned. During this time, he was ordained as an Episcopal Priest. As told by his colleague Martin E. Marty, Kitagawa assisted young Japanese-Americans in the concentration camp to contact colleges to which they could apply after their release. Later, he would also remark that, after the war, he worked for the smooth resettlement of Japanese Americans in Chicago until 1951, supported by the Episcopal Church, opening up housing and securing jobs for the Isseis (immigrants from Japan) and Niseis (American-born children of Japanese immigrants) regardless of their religious background.

After his release from the camp, in 1946, he married Evelyn Mae, sociologist and later professor of sociology at the University of Chicago. In 1947, Kitagawa received a BD degree from Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL (federated with Bexley Hall in 2013 and merged into Chicago Theological Seminary in 2016). Afterwards, he enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Chicago Divinity School to specialize in the history of religions under the supervision of Joachim Wach (d. 1955). His doctoral dissertation was completed in 1951 and focused on Kobo-Daishi and Shingon Buddhism. Upon the recommendation of his advisor Wach, Kitagawa began teaching in the Divinity School. He was also affiliated with the Committee of Far Eastern Civilizations. In 1955, he became a U.S. citizen.

During his tenure at the University of Chicago, Kitagawa taught various courses, published articles, and contributed to books and encyclopedias. Most notably, Kitagawa, together with Mircea Eliade and Charles H. Long, established the journal History of Religions in 1960 and served as its co-editor for years. In 1970, he was appointed as the Dean of the Divinity School, a post he held until 1980. During his deanship, Kitagawa spearheaded the establishment of the Shailer Mathews Professorship and the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professorship. After leaving the deanship, he continued to teach, give lectures, organize and attend conferences, and publish academic work. Due to health conditions, he retired from the faculty in 1985. Even after retirement, he continued to be productive, edited his teacher Joachim Wach’s Introduction to the History of Religions and Essays in the History of Religions (1988) and published numerous articles and books. On October 7, 1992 he died of pneumonia due to complications from a stroke he suffered in January 1992.

edited the conference proceedings as American Refugee Policy: Ethical and Religious Reflections (1984). In 1980, a festschrift honoring Joseph M. Kitagawa was published under the title Transitions and Transformations in the History of Religions.

Kitagawa was one of the founding members of the American Society for the Study of Religion, and served as its President from 1969-1972; he was Vice-President of the International Association for the History of Religions, 1975-1985, and served on other academic councils. He received honorary degrees from Virginia Theological Seminary, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Meadville Theological Seminary, and Rikkyo University.

**Scope Note**

The collection is organized into five series. Contents of the series and subseries are organized in chronological order.

Series I, Correspondence, consists of Kitagawa’s personal correspondence and signatures.

Series II, Writings, consists of offprint articles, numerous manuscripts, and documents about the publication processes. It thus represents Kitagawa’s scholarly production, mostly in the later stages of his career. Series II is divided into three subseries: the articles, book chapters, and book reviews he authored are in Subseries I. The speeches, conference presentations, and oral versions of some of his writings are located in Subseries II. Subseries III contains the book drafts and manuscripts Kitagawa either authored or edited, as well as documents related to publication processes of the edited books. Most of the folders with his writings contain one typescript draft copy with handwritten corrections and one corrected copy of the relevant piece.

Series III, Professional, contains documents of Kitagawa’s administrative and faculty activities, including material related to the organization of lectures and conferences, book catalogues sent to him by publishers, award and grant documents, and various reports and statements.

Series IV, Photographs, consists of one conference photograph and a personal photograph of Kitagawa.

Series X, Restricted, contains documents about personnel appointments, financial and budgetary matters. Materials are restricted from fifty years from date of record creation.

**Related Resources**

**Subject Headings**

- Kitagawa, Joseph M. (Joseph Mitsuo), 1915-1992
• University of Chicago
• University of Chicago. Divinity School
• History of Religions
• Asian religions & cultures
• Japan--Religion

INVENTORY

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1
Folder 1
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Box 1
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  Correspondence, 1986
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Folder 3
  Signatures, undated

Series II: Writings

Subseries I: Articles and Chapters

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  Offprint articles, 1957-1971
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  “Paradigm Change in Japanese Buddhism” - Typescript and corrected drafts, circa 1984
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  “Reflections on the Work Ethic in the Religions of East Asia” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1985
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  “Eliade, Mircea” - Typescript draft, 1985
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  Review of “The Chinese Rites Controversy” - Typescript draft, 1985
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  Foreword to the Encyclopedia of Religion - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1986
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“Kawaguchi Ekai, a Pious Adventurer, and Tibet” - Typescript, corrected, and computer edited drafts, circa 1990
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Subseries II: Speeches

- **Box 2, Folder 7**
  “On the Relation of Christianity to Other Religions” - Typescript, circa 1972-1980

- **Box 2, Folder 8**
  “The Many Faces of Maitreya” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1983

- **Box 2, Folder 9**
  Statement, American Academy or Religion, 1983

- **Box 2, Folder 10**
  “Religious Visions of the End of the World” - Typescript, corrected, and computer edited drafts, 1983

- **Box 2, Folder 11**
  “Religious Visions of the End of the World” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1983

- **Box 2, Folder 12**
  Haskell Lecture - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1983

- **Box 2, Folder 13**
  “Religious Studies and the History of Religions” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1983

- **Box 3, Folder 1**
  “Japan’s Search for Self-Identity” - Typescript, 1983

- **Box 3, Folder 2**
  “The Internationalization of Education” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1983

- **Box 3, Folder 3**
  “Zelda Hauser,” - Typescript, circa 1983

- **Box 3, Folder 4**
  Conference discussion - Typescript, circa 1983-1984

- **Box 3, Folder 5**
  “Some Remarks on the History of Religions Program” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1984
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Folder 6
“Buddhist Philosophy in Japan” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1984

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Box 3
Folder 8
Oral version of “Paradigm Change in Japanese Buddhism” - Typescript and corrected drafts, circa 1984

Box 3
Folder 9
“Honji Suijaku,” International Association for the History of Religions Congress - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1985

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Rikkyo conference proceeding - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1985

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“The International History of Post-War Japan” - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1985

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Introduction to the Hale Lecture - Typescript and corrected drafts, 1985

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Lecture I, Hale Lectures - Typescript draft with corrections, 1985

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“The University Divinity School” - Typescript and corrected drafts, undated

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Subseries III: Books

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The American Refugee Policy - Author and publisher correspondence, 1977-1985
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Folder 5
The American Refugee Policy - Manuscript, circa 1984

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Folder 6
The History of Religions: Retrospect and Prospect - Manuscript 1983

Box 4
Folder 7
Introduction to “The History of Religions” - Typescript, circa 1985

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The History of Religions - Manuscript and excerpts, 1986

Box 5
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The Dimensions of Japanese Religion - Manuscript, circa 1987 [1/2]

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Revolution and Tradition in Asia - Manuscript, circa 1990

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Untitled book manuscript, Rockwell Lectures, circa 1990

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“Introduction to the Japanese Edition” - Typescript and corrected drafts, undated

Series III: Professional

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Offprint articles, 1958

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Catalogues from “China Books and Periodicals,” 1964

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Catalogue and letter from Beacon Press, 1965

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Shailer Mathews Professorship Inaugural Lecture by Nathan A. Scott, Jr., 1972

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Disciples Divinity House, 1972-1982

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The Reinhold Niebuhr Award Ceremony program and posters, 1974

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The Reinhold Niebuhr Award - Illinois Humanities Council, 1974-1976

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Award and grant documents, 1974-1983

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Shailer Mathews Professorship Inaugural Lecture by Langdon Gilkey, 1978

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Fairfax M. Cone Professorship Inaugural Lecture by Martin E. Marty, 1978

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    List of Chinese religion entries, undated

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    Conference photograph, featuring President George H.W. Bush, 1983
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Folder 21
    Multiple copies of J. Kitagawa’s photographic portrait, undated

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