A century of Reiki practice: from one Holy Place to many versions of Sacred Space

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Overview

1) Background & religious/cultural context (Liad)
2) Intro Reiki (Jojan)
3) Holy places and Sacred spaces, Japan (Liad)
4) Holy places and Sacred spaces, the West (Jojan)
5) Conclusions
1) Background & religious/cultural Context (Liad)

- Holy places in Japan
  - Landscape and Mountains
  - Such as: Mount Kurama
- Sacred spaces in Japan
  - Shintō shrines
  - Buddhist temples
- In this context
  - 1922: USUI Mikao ‘discovered’ Reiki on Mount Kurama

Mt. Kurama 鞍馬山 near Kyoto
2-1) Reiki (Jojan)

- What is Reiki
  - Main narrative
  - Migration from Japan to the West
    - Many elements changed
    - De- and re-culturalization
  - Key features of contemporary Reiki
    - Based on assumed ‘universal life energy’
    - Entrance: initiation
    - Ritual: laying on of hands
    - Self development: self-treatment / 5 Precepts
    - Treating others/Distant-treatment
    - Use of sacred and secret symbols
    - Meaning through experience
    - Everyday spirituality
    - “Presence” of preceding Masters
2-2) Reiki (Jojan)
► Example of Reiki self-treatment

2-3) Reiki (Jojan)
► Example of Reiki treatment in hospitals
2-4) Reiki (Jojan)

- Example of Reiki treatment in public practice

![Image of Reiki treatment](image)

3) Holy places and Sacred spaces in Reiki, Japan (Liad)

- The entrance into Reiki
  - Reiju / Initiation
  - Relation
    - Buddhism: Esoteric Buddhist fingerprints
    - Mudra, Mantra, Mandala (representation cosmos)
    - Shinto: *chinkon kishin* (relation master-student-energy)
    - *Reiki* energy equals ‘deity’ = *kami*
  - Reiki Mandala is *in* initiation
  - Sacred space is created by Usui on Mt Kurama ...
  - ... and is used in / passed on through initiation ...
  - ... and can be re-created in practice
4-1) Sacred spaces in Reiki, West (Jojan)

Sacred space: how do you get there?

Through

- Re-creation of sacred space of initiation / Mt Kurama
- No artifacts; only energy, intent, state of mind
- Laying on of hands / self-treatment
- Meditation
- Tuning the mind
- Drawing the Reiki symbols (mudra)
- Speaking the Reiki symbols (mantra - kotodama)

4-2) Sacred space in Reiki, West (Jojan)

Sacred space: what do you do there?

- Experiences of the divine in this specific sacred space

Quotes

- “Being in the universal life energy”
- “The all containing / embracing”
- “Aligning with Spirit ... Reiki is the entrance”
- “Attune with my higher self”
- “I speak to God/Divine Spirit and thank them for getting me through the past”
4-3) Sacred space in Reiki, West (Jojan)
► Sacred space: who or what else is there?

► Quotes
► “Oneness”
► “Only me ... warmth”
► “I am in a Source”
► “Just me, it is my private place”
► ...
► “Spirits of deceased people”

4-4) Sacred space in Reiki, West (Jojan)
► Sacred space: what do you feel there?
  ► Entrance to more transcendent realms in which sacredness is experienced

► Quotes
► “It brings me in contact with ...[God, deeper layer of myself, source, my own being]”
► “I feel like my true self; alone, humble and accountable. My hearing and feelings are more acute”
5) Conclusions

- More “sacred space” then “holy places”
  - Transcendent realm
- Creation of and re-creation through ‘rite de passage’ of reiju / initiation to:
  - (inner) sacred space reconnected with self
  - (personal) micro-cosmos reconnected with universal macro-cosmos
- Enter at will through altered state of mind / consciousness
- Highly subjective and personal
- Rooted in Buddhist narratives and practice …
- … yet it does not appears to be Buddhist anymore
- Reflection: religious notion has become (secular) spirituality